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GREECE AND THE PEOPLE OF BRITAIN

WEDNESDAY was not the first occasion on which the Labour Party Executive has preserved a façade of Party unity in a restive Conference by "strong" platform handling of an adroitly worded resolution. This is not the first time that Mr. Bevin has thunderously demanded loyalty or disciplined rebellious Trade Unions behind the scenes. In the debate on Greece the peculiarly tragic feature was that, in manoeuvring the Conference into acceptance of a resolution which gave the Labour Ministers licence to continue in office under Mr. Churchill, the Executive and (it may be) the Ministers themselves had allowed the Prime Minister and the forces of reaction which he leads to manoeuvre them into an attitude which is not compatible with the hard facts of the case.

The platform resolution, framed after the N.U.R. and other Unions had been persuaded to withdraw more strongly phrased motions of their own, contained no word of censure on the British Government. Expressing "regret" at developments in Greece, it piously exhorted the Cabinet "to facilitate an armistice . . . and to secure resumption of conversations between all sections" with a view to establishing a Provisional National Government and free elections. Did the Executive, did the Labour Ministers honestly believe that they were thus asking of Mr. Churchill action which he was likely to take? If not, the resolution was a sham.

We give the Executive this credit: they completed this exercise in diplomatic draftsmanship before they had read Wednesday morning's newspapers. When they decided to put to the Conference a resolution whose rejection, as Aneurin Bevan pointed out, would mean that delegates would have voted *against* an armistice and *against* free elections, they can hardly have expected that General Scobie, approached by E.A.M. in the hope of a truce, would have laid down "unconditional surrender" terms (dictated, we presume, by Mr. Churchill) which preclude almost every possibility of a settlement by mutual consent. They can scarcely have imagined that Field-Marshal Alexander, from whose visit to Greece much had been hoped, would stay only a few hours and would not make (presumably because he was forbidden to make) any attempt to negotiate with the E.L.A.S. Commanders. They must have failed completely to appreciate the significance of the grim news that "reinforcements" were on their way to Greece.

The voting of the Conference reflects not the feeling of the Party or of the country, but simply the success of the executive in obscuring the real issue. Mr. Churchill has abused his dominance in the Cabinet by ordering the despatch to Greece of British forces whose members were recruited to fight Germans. They landed in Greece for no military purpose but in pursuance of the Prime Minister's personal policy, which is to break the Greek Resistance Movement. It may be that E.A.M., conscious of the fact that "rebellion" against Mr. Churchill will mean starvation for all Greece and that brave hearts are no avail against tanks and bombing aircraft, will be forced to capitulate before the struggle extends beyond Athens. If not, let us be clear in our minds: regardless of our other commitments, and notwithstanding the presence of undefeated German armies on the Rhine and south of the Po, the Prime Minister is pursuing a course which means war, on a great and costly scale, against Greece. Not against a political faction, but against the Greek people, who will sink their own differences in common hatred of British aggression. Such a war—bound, as it is, to develop increasingly into an "anti-Bolshevik" crusade—will not merely forfeit us the respect and affection of the "liberated" countries of Europe; it will speedily destroy the whole basis of our alliance with the U.S.S.R., even though Stalin, as Mr. Bevin explicitly stated, agreed at Teheran to give us a free hand in Greece if we refrained from interference in Rumania.

Did the Labour Party Conference seriously intend to give a mandate to Labour Ministers to preserve the Coalition at such a price? Mr. Bevin's emotional speech, in which he accepted full responsibility for Cabinet decisions, made it impossible for the Conference to amend its resolution without splitting the Labour Party. From that the Conference shrank. But did it mean to endorse Mr. Bevin's claim that we are entitled to "stability" in Greece, when stability means (so the *Times* reports) in our conquered area that concentration camps are full, all Left sympathisers are in danger of arrest, and "beatings" by Greek policemen have been "the order of the day"? We do not think so. Nor do we believe that the Labour Party or the British people will continue to acquiesce indefinitely in Mr. Churchill's vendetta against a nation. As the harsh facts emerge, revolt will gather momentum

The Party Machine

Although feeling amongst the Labour delegates rose highest in the Greek debate, every session revealed the growing unrest in the party. The Executive's majority was never in doubt on any serious issue, but the voting did not always reflect the real opinion of some of the most important Unions or of the constituency parties, whose spokesmen continually protested that the phrasing of the Executive resolutions, or the form in which they were presented to the Conference, frustrated any attempt to sharpen Labour policy or give it a sufficiently distinctive character. Labour is still in the Committee stage in thinking out a Socialist policy for post-war Europe; the resolution on the future of Germany makes no break with the sterility of unconditional surrender. The domination of the platform emerged also in the debate on electoral policy and the termination of the Coalition. By refusing to consider an alliance of the Left against the Tories and by failing to clarify the conditions under which Labour will break with Mr. Churchill the Labour Party has surrendered the political initiative to its opponents and deprived itself of bargaining power. In home policy, as much as in international affairs, the threat of a General Election has been enough to make the Labour leaders sing more loudly the virtues of Coalition and to resist the pressure from within their own Party for a more independent and forthright policy. Few of the delegates wanted to see an immediate end to the Coalition, but many of them were clearly suspicous that the Executive chose to make this the main issue in every debate, precisely to avoid any definite commitment by the Conference which would have given a more vigorous tone to policy either in housing, use of land, or the control of industry.

Russia and the Balkans

The fate of Budapest, as we write, hangs in the balance. The city is nearly encircled by Marshal Malinovsky, and the quisling Government has fled to Austria; but stubborn German resistance is being aided by rain and floods, and the Red Army's lines of communication are long. North of Budapest, the Russians have reached the bend in the Danube at Vacs, and they seem to be developing a more ambitious outflanking movement along the Eipel valley into Czechoslovakia. Between Lake Balaton and the Drava, Marshal Tolbukhin's advance to the fringe of the Hungarian oilfields has momentarily been checked; the enemy's right flank has been reinforced by the arrival of divisions from Italy—significant evidence of the far-reaching influence already exercised by the campaign in Hungary. Begun exactly four months ago, the Red Army's great offensive against the Balkans had evidently four objectives—food supplies, additional military man-power, political domination and (at very long range) invasion of Silesia from the south. They have secured the Danubian grain they needed; a useful number of divisions from liberated Rumania and Bulgaria are fighting under Malinovsky's and Tolbukhin's command; and, though the threat to south-east Germany is still fairly remote, Russian influence is becoming supreme not merely in Rumania and Bulgaria, but over Slovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia. An undesirably sharp division of south-east Europe into "spheres" is already visible.

Count Sforza's Reply

That the British Government strongly disapproved of Count Sforza and vetoed his appointment as Italy's Foreign Secretary we all know. But why did it take this step? Mr. Eden's first shot at an explanation fell wide. He said that the Count was disloyal to Signor Bonomi's Government and worked against it. This was promptly denied by Signor Bonomi himself, who said that though he and Count Sforza had occasionally differed in opinion, the Count had been a loyal colleague and was his very good friend. Mr. Churchill on Friday disclosed his reason for disapproval, which was not the same. It was against Marshal Badoglio that Count Sforza had worked. He gave the accusation an ugly look by producing a statement addressed to the State Department and signed by Sforza before he was allowed to leave the U.S.A. In this, he undertook to postpone matters of internal politics and support Badoglio in carrying on the war with Germany and making an end of Fascism. In reply, the Count says that on his arrival in Italy he realised that neither of these ends could be attained, so long as Victor Emmanuel was king. He therefore suggested to Badoglio his abdication in favour of his grandson, with Badoglio as regent. When the king retired, Sforza kept his word, joined Badoglio's Cabinet and gave it his loyal collaboration until he found that Badoglio was neither waging war nor purging Italy of Fascism. He adds that it was the Committee of National Liberation alone which brought Badoglio's premiership to an end. Not the least interesting statement in his reply is that during his passage through London Mr. Churchill put pressure on him to accept King Victor Emmanuel. On that subject he made his views clear from the outset. The truth is, we conclude, that Sforza was disloyal neither to Bonomi nor to Badoglio, but from the start he refused to accept the Fascist King whom Mr Churchill patronised.

The Franco-Russian Alliance

By his prompt journey to Moscow and the signature of a treaty of alliance with the Soviet Union, General de Gaulle has greatly enhanced his popularity among Frenchmen of all parties save the extreme Right. The strategical meaning of the move is obvious to the man in the street: the Fourth Republic and the Soviet Union have done what the Third Republic and the Tsardom did at the end of the nineteenth century—they have encircled Germany and placed her between cross fires. It is believed that Stalin has urged de Gaulle to take a stiff line about control of the Rhineland. The alliance has yet another meaning. It is a gesture which indicates that if France should hereafter enter a Western Union with ourselves and her northern neighbours it will not be an exclusive partnership. The French, as M. Bidault has said, have their interests in Eastern Europe, from which they do not wish to be excluded. There remains the question whether such alliances as this are the best way of ensuring the world's peace. Some American commentators, notably the *New York Times*, fear that they must compete with the World Authority sketched at Dumbarton Oaks. To one or the other, but hardly to both, nations will look for safety. If it is to alliances, will the Authority ever become a working reality?

Physician Heal Thyself!

The British Medical Association is, in normal times, a widely representative body. But, with so many of its younger and more progressive members abroad on war service, it will be taking a grave risk if it persists in setting itself in opposition to the all-in health service to which the Government has already committed itself in its social insurance proposals. It is not for the doctors but for the people to decide whether medical services shall be made available to the entire public—that is, to all who choose to avail themselves of the provision—free of special charges for treatment; and the attempt by the B.M.A. to insist on a means test (for that is what it comes to) is entirely illegitimate. We are by no means convinced that the B.M.A. Conference represents a majority of the doctors either in this matter or in its emphatic opposition to salaried medical service. Perhaps a majority is opposed to the State Medical Service in a complete form; but there are certainly many doctors who would prefer salaried appointments under a public authority to the uncertainties of panel practice; and we see no reason why the B.M.A. should be allowed to prevent them from offering themselves for such posts. We sympathise with the desire of doctors to avoid subjection to local bureaucratic control, but we see no reason why their legitimate claims in this respect cannot be met by improving on the administrative proposals of the White Paper. And if the doctor is entitled to have due professional freedom, the patient has the right to claim both a better choice of doctor than most patients have now and an assurance of all-round treatment unlimited by poverty or distinctions of class.

The Future of Agriculture

Mr. Hudson's recent pronouncements make two things plain—that war agricultural policies, including guaranteed prices, are to remain in force up to the harvest of 1948, and that there is no intention of laying down at present any long-term policy for British agriculture. What more has been decided is by no means clear. It is, for example, unknown whether during the transition, or at any rate for the next couple of years, the existing high levels of cereal and potato cultivation are to be maintained, or, if not, how much return there is to be to other forms of agricultural production now dependent on imported feeding stuffs. Some expansion in these fields does seem to be contemplated; but no great expansion is practicable except at the expense of the ploughed-up area. Nor do we know on what basis the new guaranteed prices are to be fixed, except that they are to be based on ascertained costs. The question of course is—whose costs? Those of the efficient farmer on good land, or those of the inefficient farmer on bad land? Or where between these extremes? The answer presumably is that, while cost-figures will enter into the discussions, bargaining will too, and the result will depend on the amount of pressure which the farming interests are able to exert—backed of course by the landlord interest.

The Wages Councils Bill

Mr. Bevin's Wages Councils Bill is importa Trade Boards, despite the extended sco allowed to them under the Act of 1918, have practice continued, with very few exceptio to be confined to trades in which women pr dominate, and have been handicapped by th lack of power to deal directly with piece-rat as well as time-rates or to legislate for oth matters beyond the bare prescription of a minimu wage. The Councils, which are to replace th Boards and are to apply to a wider range industries, will be empowered to prescri guaranteed weekly wages as well as hourly rat and to provide for fixed holidays for more th the week to which Trade Boards are limite In addition, there is to be, for five years in th first instance, power to compel employers observe standard rates and conditions agre on by voluntary collective bargaining; and is clearly contemplated that Wages Counc shall no longer be confined to "sweated" trad or trades employing predominantly female labou Mr. Bevin has naturally been at pains to nothing that might tend to undermine volunt collective bargaining: indeed, his clear purpose to strengthen it by granting the long-demand power—hitherto refused except in wartime make agreements extend over entire industri including non-unionists and non-federated firm Broadly, Mr. Bevin is now proposing to ma applicable over an immensely wider field th method which he embodied in his Cater Wages Bill.

PARLIAMENT: The Iron Hand

Wednesday afternoon.

Press and B.B.C. reported the Greece deb fairly fully (though not fully fairly); but hard conveyed the sabre-rattling, savage braggadoc of the Prime Minister's manner and tone, th violence of the scorn which he heaped on t Greek patriots, the cold fury with which h mouthed and lisped the fell word "Bolshevism The Labour Party (except for Cocks's init speech, which was fine in its way, though th effect of some of the more impassioned phras was spoiled by their being, apparently, read) ma a poor and thin show; five "free" (i.e., n Ministerial or otherwise enchained) Labo Members were found to vote *for* the Government at least two Labour Ministers had convenie engagements elsewhere which saved them fro voting.

Parker's speech was only half delivered b cause the Deputy-Speaker would not allow hi to apply the abusive word "partisan" to M Leeper. Driberg made an outspoken thoug somewhat disjointed speech, warning the Prim Minister not to defy world opinion with "Gad rene obstinacy." Harold Nicolson was mo constructive, and, as always, urbane and i tellectual in his approach. Greenwood glad grasped his compromise suggestions. Eden w at his suavest; a tense and full House heard hi enlarge on the progressive character of th Papandreou Government. The vote was 281 f the Government, 32 against, with many ab stentions.

The previous day had been, on a pure domestic issue, equally disappointing. Sand having been rewarded with high office for h indiscreetly premature statement that V1 w finished, calmly announced, in his first b Ministerial speech, that it would be impossible start work on the Portal houses till after th European War. Sir Percy Harris, Lipson Conservative but enlightened and sensible h dependent), Evelyn Walkden, and Silkin w among those who instantly expressed the disma in which this statement plunged the Hou When Buchanan followed up with further int ruptions, the new young star of the Church Administration fell back on that lamentab cliché, "There's a war on." Well the Labo benches knew it. Willink wound up, in

ediously conventional way, by saying that the debate had been "of the very greatest value." Members hoped so, doubtfully.

On Tuesday and Wednesday of this week a handful of Members initiated minor but entertaining debates on two pieces of domestic business which are usually only formal—the appointment of the Kitchen and the Publications Committees. Hard words were said of both Committees, which were alleged to have been "insufficiently energetic" and "obsequious towards the Executive." Muff, a member of the Kitchen Committee, apparently thought it a good defence to say that they tried to "follow the lead" of their Chairman, Bracewell Smith. He also caused some indignation by treating the whole subject farcically, whereas Winterton, Bevan, and Alan Herbert had raised it as a serious aspect of Members' needs and privilege. The House is always said to be "at its best" when it is on these domestic issues. Winterton was certainly most amusing with his summing-up of the confusion of authorities controlling Parliament physically: "the situation is the same in this House as it was in Buckingham Palace before the late Prince Consort had the whole matter cleaned up." Onlookers must have wished that the House had shown a comparable jealousy for its dignity when browbeaten by Mr. Churchill on the previous Friday.

PONTIFEX MINOR.

MR. CHURCHILL'S NEW WAR

A SECOND week has passed and we are still at war with the most spirited part of the Greek nation. It is rapidly becoming a war against Greece itself. A murderous battle with men who were our allies rages under the Temple of Wisdom, and our air squadrons, which battered German strongholds yesterday, are bombarding Greek villages to-day. Mr. Churchill's speech of last Friday, as reckless as it was callous, has done nothing to lessen this calamity.

These Greeks, who are now our airmen's target, have fought as gallantly as any people against the common enemy. No people has suffered so cruelly by famine and massacre. Exhausted by their hard campaign against the Italians, they might well have relapsed into passivity when the Germans and Bulgarians invaded their country and our little force was obliged to withdraw. Left to themselves they rallied and faced the overwhelming odds. The parties of the Centre and Left, ranging from Liberals to Communists, came together in the National Liberation Front (E.A.M.), and built up a powerful guerilla force (E.L.A.S.), armed partly by us, but chiefly with weapons it captured from the Italians. It fought so well that outside the larger towns it liberated almost the whole of rural Greece. Its forces, estimated at 80,000 men, are well organised on a model similar to that of Marshal Tito. In control, with several able soldiers, are Professor Svolos and some of the leading figures in the intellectual life of the country, with two bishops among them.

These are the men at whom Mr. Churchill sneered as "a gang of bandits from the mountains." These "ruffians," as he called them, did, indeed, face the hard life of guerillas in the mountains, while others sat passive under the German yoke in Athens or followed the King to Cairo. To understand their state of mind we must remember that they banded themselves together to deliver Greece from every form of Fascism. They suffered for three years under a Quisling Government, which served the purposes of the Nazi occupation. But they had bitter memories also of the native Fascist regime, which the King set up in 1936 under General Metaxas. Most of them had been in its prisons. If they were reluctant to lay down their arms it was because they dreaded a return to that nightmare of oppression and obscurantism.

Perhaps their fears were excessive? Mr. Churchill, who once eulogised Mussolini and saluted Franco only the other day, is equally devoted to democracy, and has promised free elections? The freedom of the ballot-box in Greece, as elsewhere, depends on the integrity of those who guard it and count the votes. Greeks in the recent past have had experience of the astonishing results that reactionary generals can produce when they do the counting. That is why E.A.M. had to watch the balance of military power that confronted it as Mr. Churchill moved the pieces on the board. The fact that dominated its calculations was that two picked corps, the Mountain Brigade and the Sacred Battalion, which had been fighting in Italy, were brought to continental Greece, which is clear of the enemy, and not to Crete or the other islands whence he has still to be dislodged. These two corps were formed last year in Egypt, when the greater part of the regular Greek Army and Fleet threw off its allegiance to the King and declared for a republic. The republican troops and sailors were then disarmed by us and interned, while the Royalist minority was embodied in these favoured corps under officers who are the King's men. As the *Times* very candidly stated on Saturday:—

> A purge of the Left had already taken place in the Greek regular forces. . . . Thus in effect certain armed contingents of the Right were being retained in regular formations, and the suspicion was that the Government intended to pursue precisely the same course in the political and administrative departments.

As everyone knows, E.A.M. had undertaken to disband its forces by December 10th. The appearance on the scene of these Royalist "regulars" caused the first difficulty. A compromise was reached, however, within the Cabinet, which permitted E.L.A.S. to keep under arms a brigade of its own men, equal in numbers to the forces of the Right, which included the guerillas of Colonel Zervas, the Athenian armed police and these two "regular" formations. As to why this compromise broke down there is a conflict of evidence. Mr. Eden believes that at the last moment E.A.M. raised its terms and demanded the demobilisation of all Royalist formations. But in a leaflet scattered from the air General Scobie called for the disarmament of the guerillas without qualification; in effect, therefore, he seems to have vetoed the compromise. The atmosphere was thick with mutual suspicion, and there was no one on the spot who had the patience or the moral authority to disentangle what may have been a misunderstanding.

The resignation of seven Ministers from Mr. Papandreou's Cabinet destroyed its authority, but need not, as we read the news, have led to civil war but for two major blunders. The first of them was the action of the armed Athenian police in firing mercilessly on an unarmed crowd. It was they, and not the guerillas, who started the shooting, and they did it under cover of our tanks. Even then, though men of E.L.A.S. attacked the quarters of these policemen, who had served the Germans throughout the Occupation and the Fascist regime before it, they scrupulously refrained at first from any hostilities against British troops. The second and fatal error was the decision which came directly from Mr. Churchill to maintain M. Papandreou in office, in spite of the fact that he himself was willing to resign in favour of a new administration. When General Scobie broadcast his threat that he would support M. Papandreou with armed force, he recklessly provoked the national pride of the Greeks. We are imposing this Premier on them with British bayonets, and behind them, by a bitter stroke of irony, we have since landed our Indian troops.

After labelling M. Papandreou in this way as our tool, it is folly to suppose that he can now find a peaceful way out of the tragic tangle. Mr. Churchill described him as Premier by constitutional right. That claim showed a complete misunderstanding of the case of Greece. The King tore up the Constitution eight years ago, and from that day, without a vestige of representative government, this brave but ill-starred country has lived under the rule of force. If it is to be made ready for an early return to orderly democracy, the thing can be managed only by a statesman who can win the confidence of the whole people, but more especially of the younger generation, which proved its patriotism "in the mountains."

We can find in Mr. Churchill's truculent speech no trace of the qualities this situation demands. He was the only speaker in the debate who had no word of sorrow or regret for the disaster that has overtaken not merely our two peoples, but the whole Allied cause. He had nothing to suggest but the unflinching use of still more force to subdue these men, whom he described as "rebels" and "mutineers." They may have to yield in the end to superior force, but we question whether even then they or their fellow-countrymen will come to feel they owed obedience to Mr. Churchill's nominee.

The process of conquering a country made for guerilla warfare will occupy troops, both British and Indian, who ought to be engaged in fighting the enemy, and it will make a spectacle which our Allies in America, Russia and France will watch with amazement and anger. Preoccupied as he is with the mechanics of warfare, Mr. Churchill has always despised the human and the moral factors in the relations of peoples. It is disastrous that he ignores them in dealing with the enemy: it will be fatal if he is allowed to ignore them in dealing with our friends. Two considerations seem to dominate his thinking. For him, as he confessed when he defended his eulogy of Mussolini, Fascism is an alternative preferable to Bolshevism. That *obiter dictum* will not be lost on the Russians. Secondly, he seems to be bent on securing, for strategical purposes, a British sphere of influence in the Mediterranean. He may, by force, secure it, but his tenure of it will be precarious if he has meanwhile converted the hereditary friendship of the Greek masses into enmity. These manœuvres, designed to secure a favourable strategical position in the post-war world, imply a division of Europe into two exclusive spheres of interest, under British and Russian leadership. The result of Mr. Churchill's habit of acting in Greece and Italy without consulting his Allies will, of course, be that Marshal Stalin will claim, in his turn, an equal independence in Poland and the broad eastern zone where his armies are supreme. But the effects of the Prime Minister's policy will not stop there. By this sinister exhibition of the cruder morals of imperialism he will rouse against us the dislike and suspicion of civilised men of all shades of opinion both in Europe and America.

It is intolerable that this tragedy should continue. It is folly if we examine it as an act of statecraft. But it is something incomparably worse than that. Whether we think of the lives of our own men and our Greek allies that are being sacrificed, or of the sufferings of the starving people of Athens, it is a sin against humanity. The horror is in no way mitigated if the responsibility must be shared; for E.A.M. may have been hasty, while Mr. Churchill was imperious. In front of this painful spectacle, sane men have only one impulse—to make an end of it at once. The good impression made by the sending of Mr. Harold Macmillan to Athens has since been cancelled by General Scobie's terms, which are a demand for unconditional surrender. We have no right to exact submission and obedience from the Greeks. What we have a right to ask is loyal collaboration in the common cause. If Mr. Churchill lacks the wisdom to extricate us from a complication that shocks the common sense of his countrymen and offends their humanity, we must look to his colleagues and the Labour Party to insist. Five years of danger and horror have not so deadened this nation that it can be swung automatically into war with a friendly people who look to us to restore their heritage of freedom.

PARIS TO-DAY

BEFORE one can begin to understand what the peoples of Europe are now thinking and feeling it is necessary to know not only with the mind but with the heart what they have suffered and still are suffering. We have all read of so many horrors that even if we believe in them—and some prefer the comfort of incredulity—we no longer respond to them emotionally. Until one has been in a country occupied by the Germans it is almost impossible to get more than an inkling of what that occupation meant to the individual. Since June, 1940, I have tried to learn every fact available here about the people of France; but only now that I have spent a month among them can I really enter into their states of mind. And for this reason I am sceptical about the possibility of communicating to others my own experiences.

The first impression made by Paris is of overwhelming beauty. The fifth column of the Crillon colonnade was broken by a shell; the *Chevaux de Marly*, which used to gleam at the entrance to the Champs Elysées, are still buried in the Tuileries Gardens; almost all the bronze statues have been melted by the Germans—no Semaphore in the Boulevard St. Germain, no Ney by the Closerie des Lilas, no *Pharmaciens* in the Boulevard St-Michel, but otherwise the aspect of central Paris is almost unchanged. And at night the beauty of the city becomes fabulous. There is hardly any street lighting, but cars and lorries use their full headlights, so that buildings and monuments, momentarily flood-lit, furnish a perpetual transformation scene of architecture. There are elaborate women looking at the jewels and furs in the Place Vendôme; the chocolate-boxes in the sweet-shops are as tasteful as ever. A foreign journalist living in a requisitioned hotel on American rations cooked by a Frenchman, and occasionally visiting the Folies-Bergère or the houses of the cosmopolitan rich may, if he is exceptionally stupid, notice little change in Paris except in the traffic and the prices. He may not even discover that the chocolate-boxes are empty—symbol of a city that is cruelly short of everything except elegance.

Prices have risen from 100 to 300 per cent. (apart from the Black Market), salaries and wages only 80 per cent. The rations may be just adequate, but they are not regularly obtainable. Until the landings most Parisians received parcels of food from relations or friends in the country. Now no parcels come. But the bread has become excellent, and the daily ration, about 12 oz., would be adequate if it were supplemented by rice, macaroni and fats. There are vegetables and chesnuts. No milk. (The children are noticeable for their pallor.) Workmen, small employees, and old people living on pensions or the income of their exiguous savings are half-starved, but when they die the immediate cause is given—pneumonia or old age rather than hunger.

From my own experience I can speak only of life as led by a comfortably off Frenchman. That is to say, I lived in a flat with no heating of any sort (and I discovered that it is not easy to write an article in a frosty room); I had a small jug of hot water for all my washing; my breakfast was bread, without butter, margarine or jam, and black coffee. (The coffee I had brought from England: the French have only a liquid made at best from barley, at worst from acorns or Lord knows what. This has nothing of coffee but its colour. The only tea available is a similarly insipid *trompe-l'œil*.) For my meals I could luckily afford the Black Market restaurants; indeed, I had no alternative, as I had not the ration card required elsewhere. Ten shillings for a slice of beef, a pound for a helping of chicken. Wine at about thirty shillings a bottle is the only thing cheaper in France than in England. Cigarettes? A packet a week for a man, none for a woman; and in the Black Market English or American cigarettes at from fourteen to sixteen shillings for twenty. There is nothing from *foie gras* to a jeep that you can't buy if you have the money. And there is a vast class of newly rich, including the butchers, the grocers and everyone who has had anything to sell. These fill the restaurants and theatres; their women, no less than the pre-war *élégantes*, wear the turbans and hennins of which we in England have heard so much. Most women in Paris go hatless. Clothes are made of some dismal substitute for wool, which contains little warmth and at once loses its shape. Friends would stroke the tweed of my English coat as if it were some rare and delicious animal.

Lack of transport in Paris causes almost as much hardship as lack of heating and of food. Imagine what London would be like with no buses, no trams, no taxis. At the rush hour it is an all-in wrestling match to get in or out of an underground train. Your body becomes fused in an uninterrupted mass of muscle and fat. One sees elderly nuns thus submitted to what seems an inferno designed to punish in kind the sins of the flesh. After a few experiences of this I preferred to walk, even long distances in the rain. But then I had good leather shoes, and the French have only soles of rigid wood. Incidentally, having to walk so many miles a day not only renews one's intimacy with the endearing details of the city but provides one with a most unwelcome appetite.

It would be easy to fill this page with accounts of the minor inconveniences. The soap is a gritty parody, which wears out clothes and sheets without cleaning them. The electric current, which is severely rationed, fails as often as four times in an evening; and one fumbles one's way up six flights of stairs (no lifts are allowed) to find that the bell, being electric, is not working and one's knocks are unheard. A variety of such trivial nuisances pile up to exacerbate further men and women who are already cold, wet, dirty, hungry and fatigued. Here in England we complain; but the difference in comfort between pre-war London and London to-day is smaller than the difference between London to-day and Paris. Coming back to England is like sinking into a luxurious bed.

Yet everyone in Paris will tell you that the governing emotion is of relief at freedom from a nightmare. Present conditions make for bad temper and threaten dangerous discontent, but there are no longer Germans in the streets. The French can walk in their city without averting their eyes. They can read the newspapers again and listen to the Paris wireless. (The worst ordeal of all, Vercors told me, was the sensation of shame—the shame not of a defeat that was inevitable but of hearing one's fellow-countrymen fawn on the victors in the name of France and of being impotent to give them the lie.) Above all, the French can now hear the door-bell ring without anxiety.

The scale of the Terror exercised by the Gestapo, the *Miliciens* and the civil police can hardly be exaggerated. I heard a hundred stories of perquisitions, imprisonments, deportations, executions and tortures. I can never forget Eluard's description of the round-up of the Jews in the working-class quarter where he lives: children being torn from their mothers, bedridden old women carried by four policemen, the whole population screaming protests, even the police in tears. The mother of one of my friends, not a Jew, was deported at the age of eighty-six in a cattle-truck. Another friend of mine, a young writer whom I was looking forward to seeing again, was caught in the Place de la Concorde carrying papers for the Resistance. He was lucky, they told me, because, not being strong, he had died after only five hours of torture. His body was found with the eyes torn out. Do people in England believe the facts about Oradour, where all the men were shot in the square, all the women and children locked in the church and burnt alive? The Germans there were characteristically methodical: a bus arrived in the village that morning, and the passengers who lived in Oradour were removed for butchery, while the others were sent on their way. I was told that the colonel in charge of the German troops called afterwards to express his regrets, for on this occasion it was not the Army but the S.S. that were responsible. But Oradour is only the most melodramatic of countless atrocities, in which the Army did not fail to play their part. What wonder if in every class I found a loathing of the Germans such as it is difficult, if one has not visited an occupied country, to comprehend.

Nothing, I think, astonished me so much as the moderation hitherto shown towards the French who collaborated. I expected a repetition of the Sicilian Vespers, but when I left Paris only one man had been executed, and none, so far as I know, lynched. In the provinces there have been more executions, but nowhere the passionate outburst of mob violence that was to be expected. There are many persons in prison at Drancy, and some of them guilty of nothing very serious. On the other hand, the resistants see daily in the streets men and women who applauded the persecutors. It might have been wiser to shoot a hundred conspicuous traitors immediately, though such summary justice would almost certainly have struck some individuals who frequented the Germans only to spy upon them. The matter is exceedingly intricate. I have talked to members of the "comités d'épuration" (whose powers do not go beyond forbidding their colleagues to publish, to act, to sing, and so forth). Some notorious collaborators can prove that they were also agents for the Allies. Almost in every case the accused can bring witnesses whose resistance was heroic to prove that he or she saved their lives. Sometimes such good deeds may have been a sort of insurance—the editor of the infamous newspaper *Paris Soir* is said to have given vast sums to some of the Maquis organisations. But, more often, since even collaborators are usually human, they genuinely wished to save their old friends. Indeed, the Nazis' most effective bait was to offer the release of a prisoner of war, a Jew or a deportee.

This matter of *épuration* never failed to crop up in every conversation. One lady, whose own attitude to the Germans had been impeccable, assured me that the *élite* of France was now in prison. (Not in Germany, but at Drancy! This reveals the extravagant unawareness that still characterises many of the rich.) On the other hand, the Communists are not alone in attributing the shortage of food and other necessities in part to sabotage by anti-Republican officials and business men who remain powerful. Catholics and Protestants, like the prominent Resistants Mauriac and Boegner, are concerned at some symptoms of vindictiveness and call for a minimum of punishment. The Communists call loudly for a maximum. Everyone is agreed that those who denounced their resistant compatriots deserve death. There is reason to believe that Maurras, for instance, must be included in this category; and Claudel has refused to be a candidate for the Academy, because Maurras has not been expelled from it. (A majority of Academicians decided that they ought not to anticipate the verdict of his impending trial.) But, apart from those who denounced, there are many gradations of guilt. To have accepted defeat, as Pétain, in 1940 may be held a disqualification for office but hardly a crime; and when the Communists denounce it as such, their opponents retort that the war record of the Communist Party does not justify them in throwing the first stone. In any case, the detention of some dull and comparatively innocuous persons while prominent traitors remain at liberty excites exasperation alike in the severe and the merciful.

Food, fuel, transport and *épuration*—these, I found, are the most immediate preoccupations of the French. But beyond lie the problems of reorganising the political and economic life of France and of her place in the world. I hope to treat these in another article.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

A LONDON DIARY

THE honesty of the *Times* about Greece has made Mr. Churchill very angry indeed. He may also have been distressed to find that the *Manchester Guardian*, which meant something to him in his Liberal days, has reached the level of its own great tradition and commented with a splendid vigour that Mr. Churchill, the stylist, cannot fail to appreciate. A. J. Cummings has written with notable force and radical conviction in the *News-Chronicle;* the *Daily Mail* showed which way the wind of public opinion was blowing by suddenly publishing a fair article by Alistair Forbes which contradicted by implication much that appeared in that paper; the *Daily Herald* is on the side of the angels even if its editorial piping is a trifle muffled in comparison with Michael Foot's stentorian trumpet blasts. In the Sunday press the strongest comments were, I think, Swaffer's in the *People* and a surprisingly strong leading article in the *Sunday Pictorial*. The *Observer* seemed to suffer from a divided mind. But in the press as a whole Mr. Churchill is left to find what comfort he can in the cold conventionality of the *Daily Telegraph* and the reckless partisanship of the Beaverbrook press.

* * *

Mr. Churchill is too old a hand to imagine that these newspapers speak for Britain. He can maintain his policy because the solid mass of backbenchers against which he himself fought for long years before the war has not yet decided to throw him over, and because what Lord Baldwin once described as the conscience of England has not yet spoken effectively in the hearts of Labour and Liberal members of the Government. Conscience speaks through resolutions of local parties, public meetings, letters from influential and unservile people and reports of anger and alarm among the population, particularly the public in uniform. There is a lot of this conscience about just now. So the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION and other papers, which have said that Mr. Churchill feared the Resistance movements and would rather support Fascist than anti-Fascist (and therefore possibly Communist) forces in liberated countries, has been right all the first three years, has it? Aneurin Bevan who dared to attack the Prime Minister when it was both bold and impolitic to do so, was right, was he? Conscience applauds Mr. Bevan with disconcerting vigour at the Labour Party Conference and conscience puts him on to the Executive. I also met conscience at the week-end in the country and found that Labour parties in areas like Birmingham and Oxford had already moved quickly, and that where Labour was slow to get going Common Wealth and Communists were early in the field—a disturbing jog to the consciences of Labour officials with an election not so many months ahead. A South Wales miners' leader summed up for me the other night: "This is a moral issue," he said, "we need a Gladstone to lead us." Odd how conscience is roused when we start shooting our friends instead of our enemies and odd how conscience remains associated with Mr. Gladstone.

* * *

Mr. Churchill, I feel sure, has started something he cannot finish. I believe that his advisers have really allowed him to believe that E.L.A.S. and E.A.M. are, as he has termed them, bands of ruffians. I am sure he has been unduly affected by stories, some no doubt true, of ruffianly acts by some E.A.M. groups. They are inevitable in any Resistance movement that has to live on the countryside. Note that with arrogance he says:

> So in the early hours of Tuesday morning I told General Scobie to take control of Athens.

Napoleonic, dictatorial, splendid! But it was impossible, as General Scobie quickly discovered. The people of Greece, not only a band of ruffians, defend themselves, and what German ruthlessness could not accomplish in four years will not be accomplished by British soldiers—even if they are Indian soldiers, carefully chosen for lack of ideological inhibitions or misplaced sympathies. Mr. Churchill must have been misled, and his order to General Scobie will go down to history side by side with another famous Churchill boast:

> There will not be a ship in the Skaggerak or on the Skaggerjak.

* * *

Mr. Churchill has committed himself to the description of bearded Colonel Zervas, leader of E.D.E.S., as a "correct" man. The epithet surprised me; for the known facts about the career of Zervas have a flavour that ill accords with Whitehall's usual conception of correctness. In Mavrogordato's *Modern Greece* I read that in 1926 he shared with Colonel Dertilis the command of the Republican Guard which upheld the dictatorship of General Pangalos. The pair aided the successful *coup* in which Pangalos was overthrown by General Kondylis, but within a fortnight they were leading the Guard, until overpowered, against the new Government's troops. From other sources I learn that during the Metaxas' dictatorship he took, but (to his credit) never earned, emoluments from one of Metaxas' rivals. When Germany occupied Greece he collected an armed band in the strategically unimportant Epirus district, leaving E.L.A.S. to do the real attacks on German communications. Though he was still reputedly in touch with Dertilis, now head of the Quisling "Security Battalions," he won recognition and supplies from Britain for his bodyguard. He is by all accounts a typical military adventurer, very brave (I am told) and quite unscrupulous. Some are born correct; others have correctness thrust upon them.

* * *

The real stranglehold over Greece is not the Army but the food and clothing shortage. A Friends' Relief Service worker now in Greece sends this report:

> The pre-war figure for T.B. in Greece stood at 22 per cent. of the total population, the present figure stands at 65 per cent. Ages chiefly affected are between 12 and 25 years. Child mortality from all causes is put down as 40 per cent. and of the remaining 60 per cent. it can be assumed 50 per cent. suffer from T.B., malaria and diseases due to malnutrition. We understand clothing is No 1 requirement in most districts. Besides clothing garden seeds are a shortage. The following is a list suggested by the Greeks—they wou'd have to come quickly to catch the spring sowing—tomatoes, cucumber, egg-plant, okra, squash, beetroot, cabbage, onions, leeks, lettuce, spinach

The importance of such domestic supplies is probably as great as that of wheat, supplies of which are already being shipped to Greece. Friends' Relief Service has recently accepted a gift of a substantial amount of clothing for Greece, and it is still collecting at its depot, The Institute, Lemon Lane, Witley, Surrey.

* * *

I have often wondered why the defendant to a criminal charge, guilty or innocent, should have to pay for the privilege of being prosecuted or even for the luxury of being defended. The Public Prosecutor represents the community against the individual, but in this country there is no Public Defender to help the individual in this unequal contest. A man I know, who was recently charged with a petty larceny and discharged as innocent by a Magistrate who said his character was obviously of the highest, had been so worried about the case that he had engaged a Counsel whom he could ill afford to pay. The Magistrate made no order about his costs. So he was left to pay twenty-five guineas merely because he had sought to establish his innocence by the only means that seemed open to him. Magistrates' Courts have no funds from which to pay witnesses or defendants' costs; so if they think an innocent defendant was charged without due consideration they will order the Police (or whoever prosecuted) to pay his costs. Unfortunately the facts can sometimes look so black against an innocent person that no one can be blamed for having brought the charge. In such a case the defendant pays; and if he fails to pay he can still, in the last resort, be imprisoned. To get any help from the Poor Prisoners' Defence Act, in practice, you need to be almost destitute; up till recently, legal aid certificates were being granted at a rate that worked out at one certificate per Court in every four years. The case for a Public Defender, with proper safeguards against any frivolous abuse of his services, seems unanswerable.

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The Talks Department of the B.B.C. has often given us an odd gem taken straight from life or opinion, but usually the speakers have seemed afraid to go all out. There were signs of courage in Mr. Christopher Salmon's excellent skirmishing series *Living Opinion* of two years ago; and now, this producer has come out with a frontal attack on listeners in a remarkable series called *Jobs for All*. The opening talk of this series which stated the problem of unemployment and brought it home to us, by living biographies, was impressive and really imaginative in its handling; the voices were true and not stereotyped. But the interesting thing is that the B.B.C. has seen the importance of making a concentrated attack on the listeners over a short period. In handling opinion, repetition and impact are everything; and *Jobs for All* not only puts the arguments for full employment in a concrete, lively and highly dramatic form, but does so with honesty and force. This series is an important new departure.

* * *

Harold Laski was a masterly chairman of the Labour Party Conference. Rank and file opinion was reflected in the poll for the Executive. Ministers scored badly. I am sorry that John Parker is off. Edith Summerskill is deservedly popular. The question I heard people asking is whether Aneurin Bevan will be "tamed" by Executive responsibility.

* * *

The best retort to Mr. Churchill came from Compton Mackenzie, who, commenting on his remark that "democracy is not a harlot to be picked up by anyone with a tommy-gun," said that neither was democracy a Rich Man's Kept Woman!

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to L. J. V. Shepherd.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

That British lives should be sacrificed in civil war in Greece or anywhere else is a ghastly tragedy which must make most people wonder whether these troublesome countries are worth fighting for.—Editorial in *Bradford Telegraph and Argus*.

The speaker at Tuesday's meeting was the Rev. R. W. Berry, of Silloth. The title of his address was "A Famous Eleven." He drew a parallel with a noted Lancashire cricket eleven with the eleven disciples that Christ chose to carry His Gospel to all the world.—*Cumberland Evening News*.

But his is primarily a positive and constructive mind, and on this side of the Atlantic we should not class him as a man of the Left.—*New Statesman and Nation*.

The Rev. Crawford Miller (Oban), opposing at the Presbytery of Lorn yesterday the plan to open eldership in the Church of Scotland to women, said that the governing superiority of the male must be preserved as a divine institution.

The proposal was rejected by 12 votes to 9.—Report in *News Chronicle*.

The exhortation "Don't telephone or telegraph if a letter or a postcard will do" has been accepted by many in the public interest. But not by all. A woman in the North of England recently handed in a telegram wishing a happy birthday to a dog in the South of England.—Report in *Manchester Guardian*.

WHY EXPORTS?

INTO a turgid and inconclusive Parliamentary debate last week on the future of British exports there cut the shockingly heretical voice of the Member for Nuneaton, asking a question. "Do we export," inquired Mr. Bowles, "because we have to, or because we think it is the right thing to do?" He got no explicit answer. The debate had proceeded, and continued, on the assumption that after the war we must sell abroad half as much again as we did in 1938; and the arguments of the Tory spokesmen for the big industrial interests were noteworthy only inasmuch as they reflected capitalist pessimism with regard to the attainment of this objective, and considerable confusion as to the means to be employed. The State must help—by remitting exporters' taxes, by providing a more enterprising and aggressive Consular Service, by "standing up" to the United States, by transferring to the Board of Trade some of the "real" business men now operating the Ministry of Supply's controls. But the State must not interfere; away with export licences, form-filling and restrictions on the employment of labour and material for export purposes. Otherwise where should we be?

That was precisely what the Member for Nuneaton wanted to know. Not, to be sure, because of ignorance on his (or, let us add, our) part of the obvious truth that we need to import *some* goods which we cannot produce—or can produce only at extravagant cost—at home. Nor do we suspect Mr. Bowles of failure to realise that we shall end this war as a debtor country, owing abroad large sums which we can pay only by delivering goods or services, directly or indirectly, to our creditors. What the questioner sought, but failed, to elicit was any indication whether the Government has any picture in its mind of the quantity and kinds of goods we require to export—remembering, on the one hand, our debts and the essential minimum of needed imports, and, on the other hand, the simple fact that there is no intrinsic advantage in shipping out of the country, until all our wants are satisfied, products which we make and can use or consume ourselves.

Now, so far as our debts are concerned—setting aside the question how the Lend-Lease account is ultimately to be closed—the most immediately important factor is the "blocked" sterling balances standing to the credit in London of overseas central banks. This awkward indebtedness did not figure in last week's debate, but its amount is known to be large. During the war we have bought goods abroad for which we have paid by obtaining local currency from the central bank of the country concerned, and giving that bank an equivalent sterling credit in Britain. It has been estimated that in this way we probably owe abroad about £3,000 millions. Of this, not far short of one-third is believed to be owed to India, and over £400 millions to Egypt, while the rest is spread in smaller, but still very considerable, amounts between Australia, New Zealand, the South American republics and certain of our European allies.

It is possible that some of our creditors may be willing enough to keep part of these balances lying intact in London as a reserve for their own (enlarged) note circulation. The rest they will obviously want to draw on, after the war, in order to buy goods they need—especially if, like India, they are planning large-scale schemes of industrialisation requiring capital investment. If they want to buy, or can only obtain American goods, the problem for Britain becomes difficult; for in that case we shall have to provide our creditors with U.S. dollars, and getting dollars means selling British goods to the U.S.A. If, however, our creditors elected to buy British manufactures, and these were available for export, the process of repayment would be relatively easy. Only—and this is a big proviso—it would be necessary to ensure that we made the kinds of goods our creditors wanted and *did not sell them in the home market*. We should have to recognise, too, that these would be "uncompensated" exports, bringing in no equivalent return in imported goods. Moreover, for every £ million's worth we export to repay these debts, we shall have to export, say, another £250,000, on the average, to pay for imports of raw materials entering into our "repayment" exports.

Clearly our creditors will have to exercise patience; and, for Britain, the task of repaying this war-indebtedness will mean a big, planned effort for many years after the last shot is fired. That effort need involve going without socially desirable things—good houses, new schools, ample and reasonably priced supplies of food and clothing—we do not for one moment admit. If we organise our industry on a basis of full employment, and regulate both our home production and consumption and our import-export trade in accordance with a firm plan of needs and priorities, looking always to the interests of the mass of our people, we can both pay our debts and satisfy our own wants. But it cannot be done if we return to the "dog's breakfast" of unregulated private enterprise, if we allow production to depend on this or that company's estimate of profitability, if we permit our exports and imports to be governed by the unco-ordinated decisions of thousands of individual firms, each pursuing its own self-interest.

In planning prosperity for post-war Britain the guiding principles are plain. Given full employment, what is the maximum we can produce? What quantities and types of imports do we need to sustain and beneficially supplement that production? What volume and kinds of exports must we contrive in order to pay for those imports and repay our obligations? The answers to those questions—and only a Government can give them—will settle the broad lines of a requisite programme. Into its framework the energies and appetites of producers and consumers must be fitted. Only when that is done can the problems of export markets be tackled in detail. But it will not be done by any save a Socialist Government.

SOVIET CULTURE TO-DAY

[From our Moscow Correspondent]

THE Future of Soviet Art and Literature has lately been the subject of much discussion and heart-searching. Two themes recur in all these discussions. One is that Soviet Art and Literature have been very good during the war, that they have fully justified themselves in maintaining the proper high patriotic tone, in portraying the heroism of Soviet people and thus being of the greatest propaganda value, and in having avoided pitfalls of "formalism," that "formalism" which is somehow identified in Russian literary jargon with the idea of "Art for Art's sake." The other theme that often recurs in these discussions is that Soviet wartime literature has been all right up to a point, but that it has not produced nearly enough and that much of it has shown a certain ideological laxity, and that many writers and artists have not sufficient Marxist-Leninist training. In short, it is time Soviet Art and Literature pulled its socks up.

In an important article in an October issue of *Bolshevik* Solodovnikov pleads for the tightening up of Socialist standards in Art and Literature and pours cold water on those who imagine there will be certain "relaxing" after the war. In this connection he refers particularly to the theatre, where he says there is a tendency in some quarters to follow the "lighter road" with the entertainment of the public as the stage's chief aim. In condemning this tendency he attributes to its supporters' view that "there should be predominant development of comedy genres, more light and thoughtless spectacles and that no 'over-insistent' demands should be made about introducing big and serious problems into Art."

It would be impossible in a short article to try to describe in detail the kind of literature and art the Soviet Union has produced in wartime, but speaking of literature first, it is clear that there was a whole literary style which emerged during the two "dark years," 1941 and 1942. It was marked by acute hatred for the Germans; but Germans of that period are not merely mean, cruel brutes, but representatives of an evil and fearful destructive force. At the same time this literature is marked by the deep and emotional love and *tendresse* for everything Russian—for Russian people fighting against terrible odds. That Russia was symbolised by Simonov in one of his lyrical poems on three little birch trees outside his window. With this dominating motif of *tendresse* for Russia, Simonov was unquestionably the most popular writer of that period. "We are all Russians, we are all in the same boat, we must all fight and die together," is one of the themes of his play *The Russians*. Here you have a Komsomol girl and a former Tsarist officer who have now come out of retirement, and a variety of soldiers who are fighting Germans in a small cut-off town with their backs to the wall. The show was a great success and received official approval and was shown in thousands of theatres during the dark days when the Germans were crashing ahead towards Stalingrad and the Caucasus. But to-day, according to Solodovnikov, this is no longer quite what is wanted. "There's something partisan there is a touch of military dilettantism in Safonov, the head of Simonov's little garrison." He says "Simonov has failed to show a fully trained modern officer in his play." The characters produced in Soviet literature between 1941 and 1942 were analysed. To this literature belong Simonov, Grossman's *The People Immortal*, Alexei Surkov's poems, poetry of Margarita Aligher and Antokolsky, Leningrad poetry of Vera Inber, Olga Bergholz and Sergei Spassky. The emphasis was on the people's suffering. This literature, without ever being effeminate, was tender and rather feminine in quality. In the second half of 1942, and especially in 1943, the tone became more masculine and more defiant and finally more triumphant. In his Stalingrad novel *Days and Nights* Simonov speaks in firmer, more masculine, tones. The same is true of that admirable short story writer, writing chiefly of the Black Sea Navy, Leonid Sobolev; the same is also true of Tikhonov with the sharp metallic lines of his Leningrad poems. "No more softness—hit back" seems the undercurrent of Russian literature, beginning in the middle of 1942. Korneichuk's play *Front*, written in the summer of 1942, was like a signal for procreated vigour. It was like saying "enough sloppiness either in military leadership or your emotional attitudes." I have even lately heard some criticism of Ehrenburg—as if people were not a little bit ashamed of having been carried away by him. They admit that Ehrenburg is impassioned. Now people are already saying "he was inclined to be hysterical."

Just now there is a lull in literary production. One hears of great novels being written by Adeyev, Persholokhov, and there is much talk of a whole pleiad of young writers turning up after the war—people who will tell us at first hand what the war was really like. But meantime we do not quite know where we are. These last few months have been marked by numerous and very heavy "slatings" in the press. Zoschenko, Fedin, Kassil, even the writer of children's verse Chukovsky, and many others have got it in the neck for being insufficiently serious or insufficiently truthful or for being "platitudinous" or superficial. Poor Joseph Utkin, who was killed in a plane smash the other day, was badly rapped over the knuckles by *Komsomolskaya Pravda* for having reprinted in his collected verse a number of love poems which the paper called "erotic in the worst sense," and one of the inherent weaknesses arising out of the almost excessive pampering of writers, in a material sense, is that too many people who have written something good and fresh when young, something based on perso

experience, then come to Moscow and live here for years, often without any contact with their own original environment, and they tend to develop lazy Bohemian habits, with their bed and breakfast more or less assured them by writing for the Union or doing hack jobs, even if they produce nothing worth while for years, having lost contact with the environment in which they had worked. Sholokhov is one of those writers who has been careful never to lose contact with the Don. He has continued to live there, and very seldom comes into the artificial writers' paradise that Moscow has become to so many.

But what of the future? Writers are looking hard for guidance. Solodovnikov in *Bolshevik* at least partially answers the question of what is expected from writers and also other artists by the Communist Party. Discipline is expected from writers, and consciousness of working not in some "free art vacuum" but inside a society where the writer must perform a definite social function. Solodovnikov quotes Lenin: "One cannot live in society and be free from society. The freedom of the bourgeois writer and artist is only a veiled dependence on somebody's moneybag." And Solodovnikov goes on: "The Soviet regime has created all conditions for the development of a genuinely free art, directed to millions and millions of toilers, and fertilised by the mighty spirit of the people and inexhaustible wealth of people's creative genius." He defines the qualities of Soviet Art as follows: "Ideological content, patriotic and realistic tendency have become the organic qualities of Soviet Art. These qualities make Soviet Art essentially different from Bourgeois Art, and make it the most advanced in the world, with the greatest inner content and the greatest social significance." Solodovnikov tends to generalise about "Bourgeois Art" and to identify it with "Art for Art's Sake," which is scarcely compatible with the immense interest in Russia for, say, Priestley and Hemingway. Are they "Art for Art's Sake," too? But he does not answer the question, and merely says, "In a Socialist Society, Art is created by the people for the people." This may not be very clear until the writer comes to the motto dominating Soviet Literature, which is "Socialist Realism." This, according to Solodovnikov, means "The Party, having emphatically condemned Bourgeois-formalist perversions in Soviet Art, has created a fruitful basis for the struggle for truthfulness, deep ideological content and accessibility in Art—an Art which brings happiness to millions." The truth is that much of this happiness, so far as it exists, still comes largely from the reading of Tolstoy, Turgenev, Gogol, Pushkin, Chehov, Gorki. But Soviet Art, says Solodovnikov, "is the legitimate heir of the invaluable riches created by the artistic genius of the Russian people in the past."

It is true that interest in the past has tended to be overdone. Together with the good things some writers and other artists are trying to revive the bad things. There has been a tendency to idealise all sorts of completely unworthy objects; for example, the idealisation by the modern Tartar poets of the ruthless Tartar Chief of the Golden Horde, who massacred and looted Russians, is more than unjustifiable.

In wartime, literature has certainly played an important propaganda role, though, as already said, it suffered during the first two years of war from a certain emotional softness against which there has been a marked reaction. Solodovnikov says: "From the first days of the war our art became a powerful weapon for the spiritual mobilisation of the popular masses," and then: "Soviet people consider the theatre, painting and literature as the school of life. They look in art for heroes who can teach them. Our art aims at satisfying this demand." But what of the future? Indications are that the functions and purposes of literature as defined above must remain the same after the war. Introspective or critically negative literature is unlikely to have any place in post-war Soviet literature. Solodovnikov deals with this question by referring to "Chehov's dreams of the high purpose of man or Saltykov's wrathful satire." Will there, one may ask, be anything like that in post-war Russian literature? I do not think so because "Nowadays reality runs ahead of art. It is full of majestic events, heroics, valorous deeds surpassing the richest creative imagination. Present-day life moves very swiftly. Events move very fast. People grow before your eyes. Only he is capable of great creative work who catches up with life and actively takes part therein." Then follows this conclusion. Referring to Stalin's speech at the eighteenth Party Congress where he said that it is necessary for every Bolshevik to try to understand the Marxist-Leninist science of society, the rules of its development, the development of the Proletarian Revolution and Socialist Society, Solodovnikov declares: "This fully applies to artists. Many mistakes in art arise from an artist's narrow outlook, who does not see the whole grandeur of our struggle, and is unable to understand the place and meaning of every fact in our general struggle."

In other words there is to be no literary "relaxing" after the war. Solodovnikov deals in his article chiefly with literature, but also touches upon some other arts, notably music and painting. He is satisfied that much of the music written in the Soviet Union during the war has been inspired by this war, and is not therefore guilty of "formalism," and he particularly commends Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony. He does not, however, mention his Eighth Symphony which, according to "formalist" critics, is a considerably greater musical work. But Solodovnikov has no use for such critics who, he says, suffer from an "excessive admiration for the Western, particularly German, art." The "particularly German" is, one suspects, put in to make it stronger. Regarding Soviet painting in wartime, Solodovnikov rightly condemns those artists who were painting gigantic battle scenes, sitting quietly at Tbilisi or Novosibirk, and who had never been to the Front in their lives. They should, he says, have gone and inspired themselves by looking at the armaments works in the neighbourhood. On the whole, however, it is clear that in painting, as in other forms of art, Solodovnikov expects artists to inspire the masses, to paint inspiring portraits of war heroes or pictures which tell the story of a great achievement. It is not enough for a picture to be merely pleasing. I remember the other day talking to a leading Soviet painter and mentioning Picasso to him. His enthusiasm was not as great as one might have expected. He said "Well, yes, quite talked of painter. But rather too experimental. Always jumping from one style to another. Certain lack of solidity about him."

UP THE GARDEN PATH

(*After Christina Rossetti*)

We have been led up the garden path to find there is nothing at the end of it.—Megan Lloyd George, M.P., on Housing.

And will State housing plans go all the way?
  Yes, to the very end.
And have you reached the target for to-day?
  No, not to-day, my friend.

But have you nothing yet that you can show,
  No homes to allocate?
One prototypal Portal bungalow
  That hides behind the Tate.

Will Portals then arise in tens, or scores?
  No, Portal huts are now quite obsolete;
The Phœnix from the Portal ashcan soars,
  And soon will be complete.

But will there be a Phœnix hutch for me,
  In rebuilt areas of blitz and blight?
The Phœnix will have high priority
  When we acquire a site.

Are not locations for rehousing planned,
  For either "temps" or "perms"?
Not yet, but all will soon be put in hand
  When we arrange the terms.

Time will new fabricated types reveal,
  Yea, homes for everyone,
Of concrete or asbestos or pressed steel,
  When once we have begun.

But when will these asbestos huts appear,
  Or steel or tin, or any other kind?
Not yet, but fourteen Ministries, my dear,
  Are keeping them in mind.

This is the garden path; where does it lead?
  I see no roofs, no walls behind the fence,
No dwelling, lean-to, out-house, and indeed,
  Not one convenience.

No hut, no shack, no bungalow, no shed,
  Of steel or brick, of plaster or of lath—
In fact, I've been notoriously led
  Right up the garden path.

SAGITTARIUS

FROM CONSTABLE TO CÉZANNE

THE pictures now at the Wildenstein Gallery in New Bond Street form the most splendid assembly seen in London since the war, with the solitary exception of the French Exhibition at the National Gallery in 1942. The artists represented are Constable, Bonington, de Wint, Turner, Delacroix, Corot, Courbet, Manet, Sisley, Renoir, Pissarro, Monet, Jongkind, Degas, Gauguin, Seurat, Cézanne and Toulouse-Lautrec. Some of the pictures are small—indeed, two of the most rewarding are the little panels by Constable and Seurat lent by Captain Molyneux. What particularly distinguishes the exhibition is fineness of quality. For if collectors have been most generous in lending their treasures, Mr. Derek Hill, who has organised the exhibition to benefit the Airborne Forces Security Fund, has been most discriminating in his choice.

Turner and Manet, it is true, are each represented only by one not very characteristic picture; the Cézannes, while of high interest, hardly give the full imaginative power of the artist; Jongkind, even when, as here, at his best, may appear a little ill at ease in such grand company; and the Delacroix Still Life, which may well be a masterpiece, is protected from the eyes of the profane by a thick coating of *consommé en gelée*. Even if I wished to carp further, I should be stumped. The Corots, Renoirs and Seurats are superlative in quality—where else has the spring been rendered so miraculously as in Mr. Courtauld's Renoir, with its feathery smoke of green? The Monets and Sisleys are almost misleading in their beauty, for they give us these artists at the summit of their inspiration. To gaze at such pictures is to recover one's belief in the possibility of happiness.

The aim of the exhibition, we are told, is to show how the tradition of landscape-painting moved from England to France after Constable (and we are promised another exhibition to show how the tradition returned here enriched by the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists). Perhaps the most conspicuous "link" is the Delacroix sketch lent by Mrs. Gilbert Russell—it was once in the Sadler collection. Though more sumptuous than any product of our Eastern counties, this reveals the Byronic Delacroix noting natural appearances with a Wordsworthian mingling of fidelity and rapture. (I do not know its date, but certainly it is later than 1824, when Delacroix was thunderstruck by Constable.) The two Constables of the Downs near Brighton are similarly interesting, because they show the artist preoccupied with a series of planes in a way that seems to anticipate the researches of Cézanne.

Perhaps the most important exemplar that the English painters brought to the French was a matter not of technique but of domicile. Hitherto painting had been primarily an urban art. True, cities like Florence, Rome, Antwerp, Amsterdam, Madrid and even eighteenth-century Paris, not only were themselves sweet to the eye, but offered pastoral scenes immediately outside their gates. And Venice, which produced the chief school of urban landscape, held out

to her painters masts leaning upon the lagoon in place of trees branching above pasturage. Thus the artist in the city was not severed from the kindly influences. If England was the first country in which the best painters were bucolic, this was perhaps because London was the first capital to isolate itself from the countryside by its inordinate growth.

The Industrial Revolution in any case was calculated to drive the painter to the countryside. And of the eighteen artists represented in this exhibition only four—Delacroix, Degas, Manet and Seurat—can be counted as predominantly urban. Ornans, Barbizon, Ville d'Avray, Argenteuil, Moret, Pontoise, Giverny, Pont-Aven, Aix-en-Provence, Cagnes—such are the sacred names of nineteenth-century painting. In contrast the masterpieces of our own time belong to what is justly called the *Ecole de Paris*. The artists may visit the countryside, but with few exceptions (Maillol, Segonzac) they have made Paris their home. And to this difference of environment is due, I suggest, a great part of the difference between nineteenth- and twentieth-century painting. The artist imprisoned in the city is driven to become increasingly subjective, and develops his art as means less of communion than of protest. Happiness, cause and effect of modesty, has given way to anxiety, cause and effect of self-assertion.

This conclusion is presented not as a censure but as a constatation. In an age of agonised turmoil the artist cannot easily seclude his imagination among the willows by a brook, the olives on a promontory. Success in such a detachment is no more to be blamed than failure to attempt it, but undeniably the tormented canvas of a Picasso or a Rouault corresponds to our prevailing state of mind. So much the worse for us, one may decide. For, looking at Corot's Dunkirk (so little ominous), at the sweep of the Seine in Monet's Vétheuil, at the deliberate hamlet in Mr. le Bas's Pissarro, one recovers the vision of what life might offer to everyone blessed with eyes; and one remembers that even the most ferocious of animals, man, has a history in which the norm has been not war but construction relieved by a modicum of leisure. For these pictures communicate to us what in their most responsive hours the painters, harassed though they might be by the bleakest poverty, contrived to enjoy—an awareness amounting to beatitude.

ROGER MARVELL

THE MOVIES

"Madonna of the Seven Moons," at the Gaumont and Marble Arch Pavilion

Within a week the best and the worst English film of many months have made their appearance. *Western Approaches* brought home to us how far we have advanced in film-making since the war; with *Madonna of the Seven Moons* we slip back almost as far as it is possible to slip. It is notably bad. Everything about this film seems preposterous except the first two minutes, when the heroine as a schoolgirl is chased by a man in the bracken. Cause of all the trouble! If only he hadn't happened to be passing that way! We should have been spared, then, "the strangest life story ever screened," the woman with the split personality, "gentle loving Maddalena—fiery fascinating Rosanna." Jekyll and Hyde brought a hint of phosphorus, but treacle is the element of Maddalena-Rosanna. Everything in *Madonna of the Seven Moons* is treacly: characters, dialogue, situation. Perhaps the most exquisitely cloying tableau of all is the last. It is carnival time in Florence and the heroine has just died in bed. Her lover dressed as a harlequin approaches through the window. He carries a dagger; he changes it for a rose. Need one add that at this moment there is a look of frenzied ruth on the countenance of Mr. Stuart Granger?

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Gianni Schicchi" and "Il Tabarro," at the Princes Theatre

The Sadlers Wells opera company has been so conservative in adding to its repertory that this choice of Puccini one-acters comes as a surprise. *Gianni Schicchi* is a masterpiece of comedy in Puccini's later manner; the rich tesselation of sound raises a grotesque situation as does, say, the prose of Shakespeare or the blank-verse of Jonson. Few operas, given even a moderately good interpretation, hold the stage more securely than this one. The Sadlers Wells performance lacked somewhat in singing quality, but a restricted orchestra sustained its important share of the music, and the action on the stage was lively. Mr. Donlevy made a likeable Schicchi. A lack of southern resonance was noticeable in *Il Tabarro;* but allowing for English voices and dispositions, the company made strong impression with this tragedy of the Paris quays. Like *Gianni Schicchi*, it grips by its mixture of music, character and movement—the last, perhaps, Puccini's most distinctive contribution to the technique of opera. We must be grateful to Sadlers Wells for letting us see an opera so rarely performed in London. The absence of the third opera, *Sister Angelica*, was no great loss, perhaps, though its serenity balances the other two.

SONG FOR THE MEN OF THE 21st CENTURY

BY HASSAN DINAMO

I sing your song
Men of the 21st century!
You'll walk on the earth
As in your own garden;
And happiness will clothe you
Like flower-scented linen.

No more war
Struggle no more . . .
There will be tears
For the dead only
And for love.

Men of the 21st century,
I hear you flow through me,
Wonderful is the sound of your footsteps!
You will not weep
In these empty streets,
Eating an apple,
Looking at the stars.

As cheap as the sunlight
Will be the Bursa silk you'll wear.
No guns, no rifles, no troubles,
You will know,
Children of a world of peace!

Will I live to see those days?
Will I walk arm in arm with you,
All along these splendid avenues?
Will the moon, the stars, the clouds,
Be as new to me as they are to you?
My grand-children, will I hold your hands in mine?
How warm life must be
In hands that sorrow never touched.

O days to be!
The thought of you makes me soar
Like a skylark;
I know that in this world
Great songs will be sung.
When you begin your first song,
Maybe my bones will be earth.
As the men of to-day,
Maybe you, too, will despise my songs.
But what does it matter! . . .
Aren't you all beautiful,
Aren't you all in peace,
Aren't you all happy!

Translated by DEREK PATMORE

Correspondence

THE POLITICAL TURNING POINT

SIR,—I wish to submit the following statement of what I believe to be the inner conviction of many Socialists at this time, as a challenge to all such to "awake from their slumbers."

(1) For years we have felt or argued that a great "divide" in the structure of European civilisation was looming on the horizon. Vaguely, and uncomfortably, we have accepted alliance and co-operation with our political enemies under various guises of national interest, war winning unity, etc.

(2) Suddenly events have occurred which convince us that the moment of decision has come. The positive, popular forces of socialism (not just "freedom" or "decency") have emerged, crystal clear, in direct and organised opposition to both militant Fascism and "free" capitalism. No longer is it an argument between intellectuals, or a conflict between demonstrators. We, along with the whole of Europe, are at unmistakable crossroads in the history of civilisation. From now on there must be no traitors in the camp.

(3) At this moment, with the prospect clearer and the issue more straight than ever before, we are troubled on every side by "diversionist" and confused utterances by all parties. We are confronted by a socialist leadership which is far less sure of itself than the rank and file whom it is supposed to inspire.

(4) The concrete issue is this. Are we to move along the road towards a federated Socialist Europe, or are we to move towards a further era of bickering nationalisms, rival capitalist and feudal groupings, and increasingly Fascist-minded social set-ups? I submit that a Socialist Britain is the keystone of the new arch. In every European country the next hundred years is in the balance, as British capitalism tries to impose its decision and lead us up its own road.

(5) In Yugoslavia military necessity led to a victory for us. In Spain, Greece, Belgium we are faced with decision at this moment. In Germany, emotionalists like A. G. P. Taylor co-operate with the realistic capitalists who seek to forestall a popular revolution by blaming the German people *equally* with the Fascist ruling class. In Italy, we are told that uncompromising opposition to Fascism is incompatible with the policy of "working a passage" to acceptance.

(6) In sober fact, Churchill and his Conservative organisation have fulfilled their purpose. Let us turn them out. Personal loyalty and hero-worship are both out of place. Only one thing counts. To choose clearly and definitely while the issue looms in all its concreteness before us.

M. R. POWICKE

CHURCHILLIAN DEMOCRACY

SIR,—Count Sforza's statement about the interview in which Mr. Churchill spent the greater part of the time "bringing strong pressure to bear" on him "to accept King Victor Emmanuel" made me wonder whether, on the defeat of Germany, the British Prime Minister would dash off to Berlin and try to enforce his ideology of a black-coated, compromising coalition on that country—"bringing strong pressure to bear" on a leading German Socialist to accept as head of the country a Nazi who had previously been German Commandant over one of Hitler's conquered nations in Europe. It would seem a quite consistent policy. For did not Victor Emmanuel accept the position of Emperor of Abyssinia when that country was conquered by Mussolini? How much longer is Mr. Churchill going to be allowed to "abuse the affection of his countrymen"?

E. M. PORTER

St. Albans.

SIR,—

He who once offered blood and tears and sweat
And of our heroes stood among the first,
Turns blood and tears into a tyrant's threat
And wins the applause of William Randolph Hearst.

AUSTIN LEE

THE FUTURE OF TRIESTE

SIR,—Mr. Taylor seems to take a partisan view in this issue. I agree with his facts but not with his conclusions. If Italy is to be denied possession of this city on the ground that "whoever controls Trieste must seek to control its hinterland," surely the same consideration must apply to Yugoslavia. It does not follow that "Trieste must be either Italian or Yugoslav" and that "there is no third alternative." Nor does it follow that Trieste could be made into a "free port" but not into a "free city." Why not? Trieste is a town with a predominantly Italian population. It is to be hoped that the Yugoslav people will see the danger of redressing wrongs by reversing injustices. The case of Trieste reflects only one of the numerous minority problems which afflict Europe; and these problems will be solved not by shifting but by lifting barriers and frontiers.

2a Duke Street, W.1. L. ZENO-ZENCOVICH

SIR,—Mr. A. J. P. Taylor's case for the cession of Trieste to Yugoslavia appears to be based on the following considerations: (1) That the town is not genuinely Italian; (2) That persecution of Slavs in Venezia Giulia forfeits Italian rights in Trieste; (3) That Trieste is the natural outlet of Yugoslavia; (4) That Italian possession of the port implies, *ipso facto*, a British obstructionist policy towards the needs of Central Europe, while control by Yugoslavia would make Austria and Hungary dependent on her and would gratify Russia and Czechoslovakia; (5) Slav courage should be rewarded with the traditional spoils of war. May I answer these points?

(a) Mr. Taylor strains his case unduly in claiming that Trieste is not really Italian because some of its inhabitants are of Slav origin. Would he claim Venice for a similar reason? As to the increase in the Slav population shown up to the last war by the Austrian census, that is known to be largely due to a distortion of the returns, with a view to reducing the force of Italian claims to the city. The special plea that "if conditions had remained the same, Trieste would have had, by now, a South Slav majority" is unworthy of a serious historian.

(b) Italian persecution of peasants in the overwhelmingly Slavonic regions of the Carso was deplorable, but no more ruthless than the measures taken by the Serbs against various national minorities. Cession of national territory would merely add one injustice to another.

(c) Trieste is only one of Yugoslavia's outlets, but it is vital to Central Europe as a whole. Of Yugoslavia, only Dalmatia, with Slovenia and Western Croatia, can be said to look towards the Adriatic; for the mountains and plateaus of Illyria effectively cut off the interior from the sea. Fiume, together with the existing Yugoslav ports of Sušak, Sibenik, Split and Dubrovnik could well handle a trade which is likely to be increasingly diverted towards the Danube and Russia and to Salonika by way of the Morava-Vardar corridor.

(d) Mr. Taylor asserts: "Whoever controls Trieste must seek to control its hinterland," but is it not clear to him that Trieste is Italy *and* Central Europe, for is not Northern Italy essentially the fruitful marriage of Central and Mediterranean Europe? This match may displease Mr. Taylor, but he cannot ignore the fact. Venice and Genoa would, in any case, remain to Italy; yet what guarantee have we that, in lieu of Trieste, they would not be used as imperialist pawns in the nightmare game of power politics which Mr. Taylor appears to envisage? Does he really suppose that the enrichment of his Balkan protégé is to be achieved by the impoverishment of his Central European enemies? He can scarcely mean anything else when he states that the diversion of Czechoslovak trade from Hamburg would be to everyone's advantage.

(e) Territorial aggrandisement is not an Allied objective in this war. The evil of fascist aggression cannot, of itself, justify the annexation of Trieste, Gorizia, Trento, or any other Italian town.

The Slovenes and Croats have a grievance indeed, and one which could be largely met by the cession to Yugoslavia of the province of Fiume, the portions of Trieste and Gorizia provinces east of the Divaccia—Aidussina—Tolmino line, together with the Quarnero islands and Zara. This area with a population of 209,000 in 1936 is mainly Slavonic in character and contains within it an answer to the Yugoslav demand for an outlet—the port of Fiume. Such a frontier would still divide some minorities, but if the proposals for local autonomy put forward by Count Sforza and Prof. Salvemini were adopted, friction could be reduced to a minimum.

It is to be hoped that the Yugoslav government, wiser than Mr. Taylor, will not endeavour to enforce extravagant claims which could bring nothing but further unrest to the Adriatic shores.

PETER M. SCOLA.

296 Henley Road,
Caversham, Reading.

WESTERN UNION

SIR,—I cannot understand why Mr. Brailsford thinks "alliances with all the client States along her (Russia's) Eastern (he surely means Western) border is incompatible with their entry into a European Federation." Surely such alliances would strengthen my point that the inclusion of the States of Eastern Europe in such a federation would ensure maximum co-operation between the European Union and the Soviet Union. The States on Russia's border would insist on an alliance with Russia, and the alliance would have to be a European-Russian affair and not merely an alliance between Russia and a few small States.

I brand "functional organisation under an Economic Council as the negation of democracy," because I am convinced that without popular parliamentary control functional bodies are in danger of becoming monopolies. I have to own to not having read *Our Settlement with Germany*, but it seems to me difficult to assure popular control without popular elections and these in the international sphere will be held only when a federal parliament is set up.

May I just add that I could not agree more with Mr. Brailsford when he says what is really needed is an organic international force on a world-wide rather than a Continental basis. All I am trying to do is to face realities, which seem to me to be that no world-wide organic force can be got at present, and that if by making wars between the States of Europe impossible through federation we can at least remove that much of the total cause of war, we shall have taken one step forward towards total peace.

F. L. JOSEPHY

1 Alvanley Gardens,
Hampstead, N.W.6.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY

SIR,—Under the guise of a review of Sir Henry Lyons' history of the administration of the Royal Society, Mr. J. G. Crowther has published in your columns a number of paragraphs betraying a sociological distaste for the Royal Society. The review shows no signs that he has read the book, and little sign that he has studied elsewhere the history of the Royal Society. The reader, trying to find out what the book is about, will, alas, only gather what Mr. Crowther is about and that is, I fear, *miching mallecho*.

He wishes, he says, the Society to reform itself on the original Baconian lines. I am not quite sure what he means by this, but, in any case, Francis Bacon is well selected by Mr. Crowther—who, but for a few minor qualifications, might be called *le Bacon de nos jours*—as a model of the amateur planners of science. Bacon took a purely utilitarian view: "the real legitimate good of the sciences is the endowment of human life with new inventions and order." He was completely unable to recognise a leader of scientific thought when he had one before him. He said nothing of Galileo and derided Gilbert, while Kepler and Harvey made no impression upon him. These four were his contemporaries. He condemned the Copernican system on grounds wholly unscientific. He laid down rigid rules for making discoveries which nobody, not even those men of science who praised him the loudest, ever attempted to follow, although, no doubt, if he had been in control he would have enforced them. His plan for research was that the journeymen of science should collect the material of science, which was *all* the facts, and that scientific overseers should then go through this material according to prescribed rules—pass it through a sort of automatic logical mill, as Singer says—and so make discoveries. It is not remarkable that Harvey, who knew something of how discoveries are made, said in derision, "he wrote philosophy like a Lord Chancellor." Other great discoverers have said a great deal worse of him. Bacon did good by suggesting that experimental science should be endowed and supported. If Mr. Crowther will be instrumental in procuring for the Royal Society an income of, say,

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JONATHAN CAPE

£10,000 a year for general purposes, unencumbered by tendencious political conditions, I for one will write a eulogy of which we shall have nothing to complain.

I am afraid that Mr. Crowther has found the history of science and of the Society an unprofitable study, for I am sure that he has not wilfully misrepresented the facts for political ends. In 1674 Newton, described by Mr. Crowther as a "professional man," had no influence whatever in the Royal Society. For the first twenty years of the nineteenth century the Society was led by its forceful President, Sir Joseph Banks, whom, far from being a "professional" man in any sense in which I understand the word, was a great traveller and explorer, a keen promoter of agriculture and of the colonisation of Australia, a man of affairs and a man of great social influence. In the nineteenth century the great engineers, some of them pretty rough—I was going to give a list, but I find that it would be too long—were Fellows, which does not look like a slighting of practical achievement, while Lord Kelvin, one of the last Presidents of that century, was quite a practical man of affairs. In the nineteenth century the Society was responsible for the foundation of the National Physical Laboratory, Lord Rayleigh, of the deplorable attitude, being the leading figure in its establishment. In the nineteenth century the Meteorological Committee and its successor, the Meteorological Council, were under Royal Society control. The Society's fruitful interest in oceanography and hydrography is known to many—I was going to say to everyone but this is clearly not correct.

I am not sure if Mr. Crowther, before raising his objections to the restricted number of Fellows and to the exclusion of those whose scientific armoury consists solely of a political axe to grind, has looked at the history of the Society round about 1840, when the numbers were unrestricted and men of general social activity were well represented in its very numerous and undistinguished fellowship. They are not days of great glory either for the Society or for British science.

It is Sir, clearly not possible for me to discuss here the present policy of the Royal Society. I wish only modestly to suggest that misrepresentation and misinterpretation of the past is not the best basis for such a discussion. We all admire Mr. Crowther's boundless energy and disinterested zeal, and the extensive office organisation which he has set up is recognised as a model of its kind, but some of us could wish that his vision of historical fact, which made him, for instance, attribute to Maxwell a secret desire to promote wireless telegraphy, was a little less deflected by his political and social outlook.

E. N. DA C. ANDRADE, F.R.S.

WHY SO MANY?

SIR,—Your correspondent last week on Dr. Joad's article on population says "the most we can hope for is a stabilisation of the population at perhaps three-quarters its present level in so many years."

Now this sort of statement is so often made that many people believe that it represents what is bound to happen to the population of this country despite the possibilities to the contrary indicated in the White Paper on population. The use of the word "stabilisation" by your correspondent assumes that sooner or later the Net Reproduction Rate will reach unity once more, but the three-quarters figure implies that the return to unity will be later rather than sooner, say in 40 years' time.

But if we can contemplate a return of the net reproduction rate to unity over a long period, why cannot we contemplate a gradual return to unity in, say, 15 years? This is important because it would mean the stabilisation of the population at about 100 per cent. of its present number. Taking the expectation of life of a newly born child as 63 years, a reasonably conservative assumption for males and females together, a simple calculation reveals that, apart from migration, a population of 42 millions for England and Wales could be sustained by a regular annual flow of 670,000 live births. This figure lies between the number of births in England and Wales in 1938-39 and the corresponding number in 1943. To maintain this level of births, the net reproduction rate must be raised to unity in from 10 to 20 years. Owing to the slightly lower average level of births in the 1930's, a Net Reproduction Rate of a little over unity from, say, 1955 to 1965 would assist the stabilising process.

Your correspondent refers to "an ever-declining proportion of productive labour." As an actuary, I am, of course, aware of the rising average age of the population, but age is merely the number of years since birth and takes no account of the changing average physical condition and industrial efficiency at the older ages.

JAMES BACON

COMMON WEALTH

SIR,—It is unwise of Sir Richard Acland to suppose that monopoly capitalism must necessarily be followed by Socialism. It may very well be followed by a managerial order in which all property rights in production are vested in the State. In the fight against Toryism Sir Richard does not help us by scattering his fire and throwing bombs at an Aunt Sally of his own creation.

I was amused by his personal jibes. In my book on the vested interests I constantly repeated that I was no politician but merely a student of politics. When Common Wealth was founded my student's heart leapt for joy, but sank when I discovered its muddled thinking. As Sir Richard's co-founders subsequently disowned him, I am surely justified in laying the muddle at the door of Sir Richard's mind. A pity it is so tightly shut.

NICHOLAS DAVENPORT

ABORTION

SIR,—The recent heavy sentences for abortion are disquieting because they obviously do not touch fundamentals. We all know that punishing the few who are found out has no effect whatever, and that the law against abortion will continue to be broken as long as we retain our out-of-date attitude to abortion and bastardy. When the alternative before a girl is motherhood with the social stigma, or abortion, it is a cruel law indeed that compels such a choice.

As, however, the larger aspect of the subject cannot be dealt with here, I concentrate on a minor aspect. One sometimes hears a doctor or a nurse say: "It is easy for the rich girl; she simply goes into an expensive nursing home where of course they find she is suffering from bleeding and they have to cure the uterus." If this sort of gossip is a lie, someone in authority should say so.

The working-class girl has no alternative, unless we consider the useless "stuff in bottles" an alternative. She can't ever afford the £60 or so which seems to be the minimum fee for abortion. So that when a conviction takes place we may be sure that the abortionist has been treating middle-class girls. And most of us have known middle-class girls, who in despair, have beseeched their friends to tell them the name of "some doctor," sometimes running round from doctor to doctor until it was too late to abort.

The minor aspect I want to examine is this one that many, many respectable, law-abiding citizens will condone and help to further an abortion. How many judges, doctors, headmasters would prefer a bastard grandson to a quiet little operation? Hardly any I should guess. So that there is a hidden demand for abortion, a demand supported secretly by all respectable parents whose daughters are "in trouble," and it seems unjust that the men and women who try to meet this demand should be the scapegoats always. Some, of course, are in the game for big fees paid in notes, but are all doctors who do abortions in it for the gold? I knew doctors abroad who would do one for £5 whether you were rich or poor; one of them told me he did them on principle not for gain. Well, well, it seems the case of bootlegging again, when the gangster was the guy who delivered the goods and got it in the neck when the cops got there. And it just seems unfair and barbaric and so very self-righteous.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

ONCE more, they will have to be given books. But what books do children like? At this time of the year the parent pulls himself together and makes his annual attempt to clear up once and for all this frightful question of the child's taste and mind. They like colour and decoration, do they? In my home a volume of the *Times Illustrated* of 1853 easily defeated the gaudy circus of lambs, rabbits, dogs, horses and wild beasts which used to pour into the house. There were hundreds of drawings in the Victorian *Times*, crowded scenes from Windsor, military processions, royal receptions, mountain battles and family scenes filled to the walls with dogs and babies. It was called "The Camel Book," because of a fine, accurate, solemn, full-page drawing of a camel. The only conclusion about young children's taste I can draw from the popularity of this book is that they like detail—the little accidental bird in the corner, the smoke coming out of the chimney—and, after detail, action and quantity. The attraction of the "Annual" was that it used to be packed; and the only criticism that it was never quite as packed as the flowery and congested cover promised. The love of detail cannot be exaggerated. Give a child a very small book of tiny, crowded pictures and he will take it to the darkest corner of the room and remain there absorbed. A child's eyes are microscopes.

In the last ten or fifteen years the improvement in children's books has been enormous; or rather there has been a wonderful flowering of the art of illustration. So it would appear to the parent. Whether the child thinks so is hard to say. He responds to the gorgeous, the fantastic, the decorative and grotesque. We can form his taste and guide his imagination. But he is a natural realist. He likes objects to be solid; he is bored by the impressionistic and sketchy. These seem to depress the modern child as the stilted, doll-like figures and babyish trees and lumpish animals used to bore an earlier generation. A child's interest can be stirred by anything, but I am convinced he is capable of feeling æsthetic pain. I remember hating the dry rough paper of some books in my childhood. It was like dust in the nose. I hated the smell of certain books. I hated scribble and blurs in illustration. And when I say hate I mean there was an active physical revulsion. The "Annuals" were horrible to me. Their big, blank lifeless drawings bored because of their emptiness, the untouched spaces between their lines. And later on some of the obvious classics for children repelled me because of their print, their narrow margins, their "silly" illustrations. A child quickly rejects the childish.

A glance at any railway bookstall shows that the war has revived some of these horrors; but it does not seem to have diminished the gaiety and originality of the well-produced books. They are as numerous as the bad ones, cheaper and far more spirited; in fact, never before, I think, have very cheap good books for children—the *Puffins* are an example—been so common. The *Puffins* have made a revolution. They have broken with the lowest academic conventions. It is a pleasant comment on our culture that a child's book is now refreshing to the eye or touch; the war has barely affected the paper or the printing.

On the whole, one does not regret the passing of the moral tale for children. *Alice in Wonderland* was a moral tale, filled with those quiet reminders which children recognise with pleasure. *Struwelpeter* was a masterpiece which still delights the dual nature of children. The pill of morality for them, one notices, requires the jam of catastrophe. "I'm tired of my missus," says the child playing a game by itself. "She's no good. She has headaches. I'm sending her to hospital to be killed." A little morality adds a domestic cosiness to the idea. Where the Victorians were often wrong was in thinking that children like the idea of horrors happening to themselves. I say "often," but not always. I have forgotten which is the masochistic age; but I remember that the morbid pleasure of the legend of St. Nicholas, who saved the pickled children, lay in the pickling, not in the salvation. Spanish children, as some of the children's books on sale in Barcelona show, are fed on appalling pictures of butchery. The modern child's book moves away from these horrors and, after the watery refinements of Peter Pan—a social document if there ever was one—has become more civilised. But there is a modern Peter Panishness. I am thinking of those sophisticated books for children which are indiscreetly ironical about a child's interests, which play down to the child and are really examples of the adult playing at childhood. I have noticed one or two American books of this kind. Their sophistication is morbid. These books recall painfully the embarrassing and clever fancies of some childless people. They suggest the large golliwog on the spinster's divan, the baby-talk in the luxury flat, the pekinese who "says to his Mummie, he says." This adult make-believe is boring and ridiculous to the cold eyes of the child. I thought that the episode of the archæologist in that otherwise delightful book *Henrietta the Faithful Hen* was a border-line case. Archæologists playing at being archæologists! I saw the shutters of boredom come down upon the child's face.

There is one fault which is present in a great many of the best modern books for children. They are wonderfully illustrated by the best artists, but their text is filled with obscure and careless sentences. I know that it is hard to fit a child's book to the exact age, and that the gulf between five and seven, or any other close ages, is enormous. But I am not thinking of the use of long or difficult words, nor of things which a child may not be able to grasp. "His parents did not wish to send him to a Government school, so they engaged a private tutor who was an eminent scholar." That is rather hard on a young child for whom the book is intended, but one hurries over it and hopes for the best. The real fault is more serious. Simplicity, purity of style, freedom from clichés, the use of concrete words, are essential to the writing of books for children; yet how often the stories are suddenly blurred by dead English. A child "sees where he is"; he does not "distinguish all his surroundings." He "sees a bird"; his "attention" is not "caught" by it. He does not hear "the air ring with applause"; he hears "people cheering." Children love new long words. They dislike dead phrases which humiliate them. Their imagination which races neck and neck with fact is tripped and floored by obstacles like these.

I have been going through a pile of this season's books. The crown is a new Orlando. It is called *The Silver Wedding*, by Kathleen Hale (Country Life, 6s.), rich, gay, with crowded day and night scenes and filled with cats of all colours. This is an early Edwardian number, with tandems and top hats, party dresses and a burglar. There is a timeless family group round the stew-pot and ladle at the end. Orlando, I suspect, is often given to children who are too young. *Blue Peter*, by Lewitt-Him (Faber, 6s.), is a puppy story by the authors of that excellent *The Little Red Engine Gets a Name*. There are plenty of puppies in blue and black. I would also recommend the illustrated verses—"Minnie and Winnie Lived in a Shell," "There Were Three Crows Sat on a Tree," in *Bells Across the Sand*, by T. Ritchie (Chatto and Windus, 1s. 6d.); two very likely Baby Puffins, the *Puffin Rhymes* and *The Old Woman and Her Pig*, by John Harwood (6d. each). *Barbara Lamb*, by Cam (The Bodley Head, 5s.) belongs to the wriggly, fanciful school of illustration. *Mou Mou the Field Mouse*, Robert Tredinnick (Brockhampton Book Co., 6s.), is amusing. *The Young 'Un*, by Norah Pulling (Transatlantic Arts, 5s.), is a poem about a dragon. These books have plenty of pictures. Lastly, *Rhymes Without Reason*, by Mervyn Peake (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 7s. 6d.), is the work of a remarkable artist who inherits the morbid originality of the Victorian illustrators. This grotesque book is more amusing and less terrifying than his last which, nevertheless, came disturbingly close to the child's-eye view of things and was much admired by my family. His nonsense verses are "older" than the pictures.

> They search for Warmth and Clothes to Mend
> But mostly for their Wives
> Who left them long ago to lend
> More Colour to their Lives.

Mr. Peake's nonsense verses come close to a delightful revival of Arthur Egerton Colton's *Queer Creatures* (Sylvan Press, 5s.). These grotesques of the 90s—the Noshun, The Waydge, The Kattastroffee—were worth reviving.

For older children: *Gigi, The Merry Go Round Horse*, by Elizabeth Foster, illustrated by Ilse Bischoff (Collins, 10s. 6d.); *The Nightingale*, by Margaret and Mary Baker (Blackwell, 5s.); *Brendon Chase*, by B. B. (Hollis and Carter, 12s. 6d.), excellent illustrations by D. J. Watkins-Pitchard. This is a solid, well-written, tracking, camping book in the tradition of the Children of the New Forest. *Spanish Fairy Stories*, translated by Gamel Woolsey (Transatlantic Arts, 7s. 6d.), are exquisite folk-tales freshly and simply told. Another foreigner is a collection of Swiss folk-tales, *The Three Sneezes*, by Roger Duvoisin (Frederick Muller, 6s.). Then there are: *The Island Adventure*, by Enid Blyton (Macmillan, 7s. 6d.); *Three and a Pigeon*, a war story, by Kitty Barne (Hamilton, 7s. 6d.); *Good Comrades*, by Felix Salten, author of Bambi's children—these are good animal stories, but not very well illustrated. (Transatlantic Arts, 7s. 6d.) *How Old Stormalong Captured Mocha Dick*, by Irwin Shapiro, illustrated by Dinah McKay, a breezy, humorous whaling adventure off Nantucket, which cheerfully revives the legend of Moby Dick. (Blackwell, 5s.)

V. S. PRITCHETT

CATHOLICISM AND THE STATE

Security, Freedom and Happiness. By ANDREW GORDON, S.J. *Samuel Walker, Hinckley.* 2s. 6d.

Eamon de Valera. By M. J. MACMANUS. *Gollancz.* 8s. 6d.

Catholic social principles, by which is meant the set of moral criteria applied by the Catholic Church to any given organisation of society, tend to be regarded by serious Leftists as irrelevant rather than pernicious. What light, it is asked, do the principles in question throw on the central issue of the age, the struggle between the haves and the have-nots, between privilege and social justice? What possibilities of prediction do these vaunted principles offer so long as they confine themselves to the moral as opposed to the technical sector of politics? What leading contemporary statesman has drawn practical inspiration from them in a progressive sense? As a reply to these suspicions an authoritative textbook of Catholic sociology would seem at first sight to dovetail neatly with a noticeably vivid and well-informed biography of the outstanding Catholic statesman of the day (incidentally, a passionate democrat). Father Gordon might be supposed to give us the theory and Mr. de Valera, if anyone, the practice.

Actually the link between the two books, through no fault of the authors, is disappointingly slender. There is little doubt that if ever Ireland's external position becomes normalised, Mr. de Valera will strain every nerve to effect in his own lifetime the great social changes that will be necessary before Ireland embodies such social principles as those outlined by Father Gordon. But during the twenty-eight years that have elapsed since Mr. de Valera stepped forth, after the 1916 rising, as the leader of the Irish people, Ireland's external position has never remotely approached the normal. 1916–23 saw smouldering insurrection, war of independence and civil war; 1923–32, uneasy lull with Mr. de Valera out of office; 1932–38, economic war, initiated by this country; 1938–39, renewed concentration on the Anti-Partition issue; 1939–44, world war

with Ireland maintaining a tense and precarious neutrality. In these circumstances the housing schemes, the measures of land redistribution, the family allowances, the intensified autarchy and other social and economic changes have forecast rather than constituted the Catholic social revolution which he may be presumed to have in mind.

He emerges instead from the biography under review as the inspiring revolutionary leader who has graduated into the shrewd administrator and diplomatist—an achievement equalled by more than one contemporary outside the Church, Marshal Stalin, for instance. What seems most distinctively Catholic in his record up to the present is the consistency with which he has held in equilibrium a wide variety of supposedly incompatible standpoints. A real statesman, whatever his ideology or creed, is *ex-hypothesi* a great schizophrene, his personality split between sociology and politics, all balance with a view to truth and yet all emphasis with a view to persuasion. Mr. de Valera's life will encourage Catholics who feel that this should be doubly true of a Catholic statesman brought up on the concept of *balance*, not only as the sole means of reconciling theory and life but also within sociology itself as the prime criterion of theoretical truth. Almost from his first appearance in Mr. MacManus's book we find Mr. de Valera embarked on his life-long study of how to reconcile Irish independence with British security. The intransigent nationalist's debut as champion of nationalism at Geneva in 1932 would have caused less of a sensation if his life-long philosophy of balance had been better understood inside and outside Ireland.

Catholic sociology starts with a theological position and proceeds through ethics and politics to economic and social organisation. In this hierarchy of values it differs sharply from the current tendency, as pronounced among Conservatives as among followers of Marx, to put the economic question first, politics second, ethics third and theology, if anywhere, last. The Catholic argument as expounded lucidly and compendiously by Father Gordon, leads one steadily and, it is claimed, ineluctably, from the universal truth of the Fatherhood of God to the Guild social system as an appropriate cure for the evils of western civilisation in the fifth decade of the twentieth century.

Fascism, Communism, Monopoly Capitalism (and cut-throat competitive capitalism for that matter), "State Socialism," are alike rejected. In the first three cases it is obvious why. Once accept the Fatherhood of God and the immortality of man and there is no room left for doubting the proposition that all men and women are of equal and infinite importance. Fascism spits at equality, and Communism, in such transitional aspects as have been vouchsafed to us, overlooks the infinite worth of each individual. Capitalism, monopolistic or other, while defended with a wealth of lip-service to Christian ethics, in practice makes man a slave of man. In castigating "State Socialism," however, Father Gordon assumes more debatable ground. Of the milder Socialists he admits "There is much in Catholic sociology which finds common agreement with their final aims of justice, charity and a fairer distribution of wealth," and with at least part of their proposed means to gain this end. "But the Christian is forced to condemn them for their materialism if not on other grounds, until these evidently sincere men see the need for the religious spirit and are ready to support Christian public spirit and not treat religion with an apathy that borders at times on contempt." Here and elsewhere he seems to imply that if anyone disagrees with his scheme of social reorganisation, there must be something wrong with their religious basis; put another way, that the Christian view of human nature leads inevitably to a specifically Christian form of social organisation as against the "State Socialist" form. This may be true, but even devout Catholics, if they do not happen to be versed in Catholic sociology, will find it far from obvious.

Father Gordon explicitly recognises the need for a "planned economy," "but the natural body to undertake the planning for each industry or occupation is not the State but a group of men appointed from the employers and workers of the industry itself." Why? How do the principles of the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, the equality and infinite worth of every individual soul, settle the issue between State planning and Guild planning in favour of the latter? The answer is that, taken alone, they don't. A further step is necessary, the acceptance (still under the influence of reason as distinct from revelation) of the Catholic philosophy of spiritual growth, the Thomist synthesis of Aristotle and the New Testament.

Secular Socialists condemn capitalism on three grounds; that it is inefficient in production, that it is unjust in distribution, and that it is spiritually unhealthy. Catholic sociology, refusing to dogmatise on the first point, is no wit less violent as regards the second and third. And yet it would be affectation to ignore the want of sympathy so often found both in practice and theory between progressive Catholics and secular Socialists. In the last analysis this does not spring from any marked difference between their respective ideals of social justice but from the refusal of Catholics and the inclination of Left-wing secularists to give social justice absolute priority over all other values.

Father Gordon, for instance, when discussing the national dividend, is concerned not only with the relative size, let alone the absolute size, of the pieces of bread or slices of cake when they reach our plates, but with what goes on to get them there. He faces the possibility, always more easily faced by Aristotelians than Utilitarians, that the ideal distributive result in terms of justice may conflict with the ideal productive process or ideal manner of living from the standpoint of liberty and the family, not to mention that of faith and worship. His "Guild" solution will recommend itself increasingly to the Left as the present division he assumes between the "two sides of industry" lose its present "property versus proletariat" character, under that radical redistribution of property to which all Catholic sociologists are well and truly committed.

Father Gordon speaks as a representative Catholic Priest, but one imagines that most of what he has to say would be endorsed by sociologists from the Church of England and the Free Churches. His important book should be read by all Catholics and by all non-Catholics interested in Catholic sociology, just as all Irishmen and all non-Irishmen interested in contemporary Ireland should be able to enjoy and will certainly profit from reading Mr. MacManus.

FRANK PAKENHAM

GOOD WRITING

New Writing and Daylight. Ed. by JOHN LEHMANN. *Autumn*, 1944. *Hogarth*. 10s. 6d.

Where our grandfathers plumped for a yellow book, that might hold in its uncompromising shade a Henry James story next to a Beardsley drawing, we prefer the safety of the rainbow. Yellow one month, purple the next, red and true blue in succession, the readers of *Horizon* and of *New Writing* escape, let us hope, moral or political prejudice. What movements, what fashions even, are discernible as the spectrum flickers round? It would be a little hard to say. Both periodicals have a high literary standard; both—politically speaking—are red to pink. *New Writing* commands the larger field, *Horizon* the sharper taste. Yet even these distinctions, with the war nearing its finish, have tended to dissolve, so that we look less to protective colouring and more and more to the quality of the writing. If one number isn't so good, we wait hopefully and patiently for the next. The latest *New Writing and Daylight*, after some measure of disappointment in earlier issues, is very good indeed.

Half magazine, half-volume, it is an attractive hybrid when the contents merit re-perusal. I don't think I was particularly fortunate in my dipping; wherever I had started, I should have struck lucky, for in this case the usual roll-call is followed by a full parade. The first piece I turned to was Saint-Exupéry's *Letter to a Hostage*. Among the heroes of our time he is, I should say, the least assailable as a writer: one never feels, as with T. E. Lawrence, the conflict of priggishness and genius, the unresolved longings frozen into impersonality. Saint-Exupéry was, in his way, as remarkable a man of action as Lawrence, with the air as his desert, and all he wrote is the product of an exquisitely attuned talent. The thrilling descriptions in *Night Flight* of the unfamiliar, of daring, of solitude, conveyed something more than the actions described; here was an explorer who could detail, in beautifully candid prose, exactly what he felt, as the Mallorys and Amundsens couldn't. His *Letter to a Hostage* is remarkable for the same qualities. The scene here are Lisbon in 1940, a day before the war in a restaurant by the Saône, an incident in the Spanish war, the Sahara; memories of an exile feeling his way back along the threads of his attachment. For Saint-Exupéry civilisation was broken with the fall of France, and in this letter to a hostage—a Jew—held by the enemy, he enumerates the qualities the Nazis seek to destroy. Their answer to fellow feeling has been blood brotherhood; to love, the death-van. The exploration of this theme is both passionate and subtle. Saint-Exupéry was killed in action this autumn, and we can imagine the fate of the unknown friend—"There is no common multiple between the soldier's job and that of the hostage—you are the saints"—to whom this letter is addressed.

Two other contributions to this number are posthumous. A longish piece by Alun Lewis, given pride of place, is perhaps the best poem he wrote. The experience of the war poet has usually a single confluence and vision, and the jungle was for Alun Lewis what the desert was for Sidney Keyes. In his case, a camera of past fevers and injustices and of present antisepsis.

> A trackless wilderness divides
> Joy from its cause, the motive from the act:
> The killing arm uncurls . . .

Considering the old life and the new (if you can call it life), the poet-lover and the killer, he exclaims:

> Oh you who want us for ourselves,
> Whose love can start the snow-rush in the woods
> And melt the glacier in the dark coulisse,
> Forgive this strange inconstancy of soul,
> The face distorted in a jungle pool
> That drowns its image in a mort of leaves.

And the last figure, that makes this almost an obituary number—but without any of the usual platitudes of interment—is Demetrios Capetanakis. No less than four articles are devoted to him, and after reading them one feels they are justified. Miss Sitwell's able and generous appreciation of his poetry strikes remorse: how, having carelessly read him and met him, can one have underrated the quality in his work? For the quality, as Miss Sitwell demonstrates by quotation, is there; "Abel" is a remarkable poem:

> My brother Cain, the wounded, like to sit
> Brushing my shoulder, by the staring water
> Of life, or death, in cinemas half-lit
> By scenes of peace that always turned to slaughter.
>
> He liked to talk to me. His eager voice
> Whispered the puzzle of his bleeding thirst,
> Or prayed me not to make my final choice
> Unless we had a chat about it first.
>
> And then he chose the final pain for me.
> I do not blame his nature; he's my brother;
> Nor what you call the times; our love was free,
> Would be the same at any time; but rather
>
> The ageless ambiguity of things,
> Which makes our life mean death, our love be hate
> My blood that streams across the bedroom sings
> "I am my brother opening the gate."

There is no exaggeration in comparing this, as does Miss Sitwell, to certain poems of Hardy, though the surface is easier and the under-current

more cryptic; its diction alone puts most of our living English-born poets to shame. Three personal essays, by William Plomer, Panyotis Canellopoulos and John Lehmann, give an unusually living portrait and enhance one's sympathy with a quiet but illuminated mind.

The other poets in the volume are F. T. Prince, Stephen Spender, Henry Reed, and John Heath-Stubbs—all in good form, especially the last, whose four poems from Leopardi should recommend a poet congenial to modern taste and little read in England. The best of the stories is V. S. Pritchett's "It May Never Happen": one of those anecdotes, squirming with character, which this writer can apparently extend to almost any length short of the novel. Julia Strachey makes one of her rare and welcome appearances with a visit to the country in sizzling August; "An Attack on Indigestion" is expertly, delicately ghoulish in its fun. A brief revealing memory of his mother by Gide (translated by Raymond Mortimer), an article by John Lehmann on recent poetry, and a description by Harold Acton of the Chinese popular theatre also catch the attention. I find that a third of the items, including C. V. Wedgwood's "The Writing of History" and Capetanakis's "Introduction to Greek Poetry," have still not been mentioned. Some of them I have read; others I have put off till another time. It is the special charm of the periodical (even in stiff covers) that without impoliteness one can leave a little on one's plate.

G. W. STONIER

CITIZEN THOMAS ATKINS

A Soldier Looks Ahead. By CAPTAIN "X." *Routledge.* 6*s.*

Whoever the anonymous, ex-journalist author of this excellent book may be, he has done a great service for his fellow-soldiers and for his comrades in the Labour movement to which he belonged before the war. He is now "missing" in the Normandy battles for which he trained with enthusiasm and genuine anti-Fascist conviction. Yet he has left behind in his book a fitting testimonial to his work and to the cause for which he volunteered in September, 1939. Captain "X," who writes simply and honestly, without any attempt to conceal his own limitations, has tried to show from his own experience the changes that have taken place in the British Army since the outbreak of war, the shortcomings that still exist in its organisation and the reforms in its structure which are necessary if, after the war, it is to become a democratic army, recruiting its leadership from all sections of the community and offering the chance for its soldiers to be citizens in the fullest sense.

This is a book which, one knew, had to come out of the war. The presence in the Army of progressively minded officers who had been political enthusiasts, trade-unionists, students, or journalists, made it certain that sooner or later one of them would find time to sit down and draw a picture of the Army from the inside. It was a job that could only be done by somebody who had gone into the Army as a conscript and had worked his way up through four years of war. Before the war, the Army was an object of suspicion for the Left. But if Captain "X" is a typical example, as I believe he is, of the best of the younger generation of Socialists, then there has been a revolution in the outlook of Socialists which is of far-reaching significance. For he accepts the Army—as it is accepted in the U.S.S.R.—as an indispensable instrument in our present age, not merely of defence, but of education and enlightenment. And he has worked out in concrete terms what has to be done by a Labour Government to turn that conception into reality.

The book is divided into three parts. The first discusses the changes "X" has seen take place in the methods of training, officer recruitment, education, pay, and in morale. Taking a letter he wrote to a friend soon after he joined up, he shows how nearly all the reforms he regarded as immediately necessary in 1939 have now been partially or wholly achieved by an Army Council which he rightly considers to be unusually enlightened. For he is prepared to give credit where it is due and to criticise with equal impartiality. He talks of the job that remains to be done in simplifying administration, in extending the opportunities of promotion, making A.B.C.A. much more effective, overhauling the pay and allowances system and creating a closer bond between officers and men. The widespread cynicism of the ordinary soldiers, their politics, their attitude to church parades and sex are each dealt with in a way that shows how closely this captain—and he is not by any means an exception—has followed the feelings, hopes and frustrations of his men.

The second part contains proposals for building a democratic post-war army which, without any violent break with tradition, could, undoubtedly, offer a career to young men which would be fruitful both for them and for society as a whole. Captain "X" proposes to retain conscription, but to create a corps of N.C.O.s and officers from volunteers out of the conscript ranks, whose conditions of service, cultural and educational facilities, pay and citizen rights would be equal to what they would have enjoyed had they remained civilians. He sets out several important administrative reforms—amongst other things he suggests a mixed commission of business men and officers to overhaul clerical routine—but for the ordinary ranker, by far the most controversial issue is the contention that saluting, smartness, drill, punishments, batmen and all the rest of the apparent impositions of a blimpish military caste should not be relaxed but, if anything, intensified in a really democratic army. If the purpose of discipline is made clear, Captain "X" insists, it is the most powerful stimulant to morale and understanding between officers and men. An army which has abolished privilege and social status as prerequisites of success should be able to develop an officer corps which represented the finest and most able elements of the population and which commanded the affection and respect of its men. A democratic army is *not* one in which absolute equality prevails, and whose officers are elected by the men. Democratic control comes from the elected representatives of the people, sitting in Parliament. Captain "X" also makes valuable comments on the conduct of unit education meetings and recommends—shades of Cromwell's Model Army!—the introduction of Army Council Delegates whose job would be similar to political commissars; mass meetings of the men to discuss matters of common or political interest; and the creation of some channel whereby men could express grievances or make suggestions for changes in orders or methods of work without the delay which the present conditions impose. Many of these things could be done without altering existing regulations. Already, if instructions were fully carried out, many of the reforms would be accepted features of Army life. But, in fact, these regulations are sidestepped at present, and any Labour Government could not improve matters or carry through reforms merely by making new ones. It would have to take other measures to see the reforms were actually carried out.

It is to this problem that Captain "X" addresses himself in his concluding section. He tries to show how the Labour Party can give a political lead to the returning soldier—he stresses the importance of a clear and simple programme—and, in itself a sign of the times, he urges unity

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of the Left as an indispensable condition of a strong Labour Party. This is an inspiring book which should be read by politicians as well as soldiers. If I have said nothing of the attractive style in which it is written or of the way in which Captain "X" illustrates his argument with stories drawn from his experience, it is because I have wanted to draw attention to the importance and insight of its main thesis. But it is as enjoyable to read as it is valuable to study.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

MAGIC AND ADVENTURE

In the Land of the Thinsies. By DOROTHY ANN LOVELL. Illustrated by NICOLAS BENTLEY. *Faber.* 6*s.*

Spanish Fairy Stories. Translated by GAMEL WOOLSEY. *Transatlantic Arts.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Three Rings. By BARBARA BAKER. *Hogarth Press.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Wind on the Moon. By ERIC LINKLATER. Illustrated by NICOLAS BENTLEY. *Macmillan.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Dangerous Treasure. By NORMAN DALE. *Lane.* 6*s.*

Mary Poppins Opens the Door. By P. L. TRAVERS. *Peter Davies.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

More Jungletown Tales. By C. NELSON. Illustrated by BIRO. *Sylvan Press.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

John and Mary at School. By GRACE JAMES. *Muller.* 6*s.*

The Railway Children. By E. NESBIT. *Wells Gardner.* 5*s.*

Runaway Adventure. By M. E. MATHEWS. *Sylvan Press.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Each year brings its own fashion in children's books, and this Christmas—the sixth of the war—it is interesting and delightful to see that magic has come into its own again. Witches provide spells, children turn into kangaroos and tigers, painted pigeons fly down from the wallpaper and coo. The world of everyday and practical reality (and incidentally its master exponent Arthur Ransome) is in abeyance, perhaps because it becomes increasingly difficult to present it in a cheerful or amusing light, and writers have had to draw on their own fantastical imagination.

In the Land of the Thinsies a little girl, hunting for a lost sixpence, slips through the crack at the bottom of a moving staircase; but this disaster, morbidly dreaded by many travellers by Underground, does not turn out at all horrific. She merely finds herself in a world where everything including herself is flat, as though cut out of paper. Nicolas Bentley's coloured pictures are flat, too, to match. A nice book for younger children, say from 5 to 10. For this age, too, there is a new collection of old fairy tales, beautifully translated from the Spanish by Gamel Woolsey. They have the wit, concentration and poetry that only the best fairy stories possess. A quotation will show how successfully the translator has preserved the last quality:

> Then the clear fountain asked: "Why, dove-cote brown, have you thrown yourself down?" "Because Ratonperez has fallen into the stew, and the Little Ant weeps and doesn't know what to do; and the birdling weak has cut off its beak; and the house-dove pale has cut off her tail; so I, dove-cote brown, have thrown myself down!"
>
> "Then I, fountain clear, will weep many a tear."

Children's books are a new departure for the Hogarth Press, and one expects nothing ordinary from them. *The Three Rings* certainly is an extraordinary book. Three children living in Malaya find magic rings which enable them to turn into tigers, their life as wild animals being entered into with considerable imagination and vivid details of what it feels like to possess fur and claws and tear raw meat with one's teeth. This part of the book is remarkable and will delight jungle-minded children. The behaviour of the adult relations is not so well realised, and "extraordinary" is too mild a word for it. This and all but the last book on this list are suitable for children of about 7 to 12.

The Wind on the Moon is sure to be a success. Eric Linklater has a fertile and varied invention which has created, seemingly with no effort, a riotous world of sense and nonsense mixed, rich in incidents both magical and natural, and inhabited by characters ranging from a witch and a K.C. to a talking puma and a bear that reads the *Times*. Norman Dale in *Dangerous Treasure* has written a sequel to last year's *Secret Service*, telling how the children explore a ruined priory, discover secret rooms and a treasure, and get mixed up with crooks and a forest fire. An exciting story for boy or girl. *More Jungletown Tales* is another sequel, and for those who enjoyed the first volume it is only necessary to say that this is better still. *Mary Poppins*, the "Perfectly Perfect" magic nurse, has I believe many admirers, and her new adventures are exciting enough, from the moment when she arrives out of the sky like a rocket in a shower of stars, until her final departure in the same fashion. But she will not be to the taste of those who dislike jokes about the income-tax, "Things going from Bad to Worse," and a great deal of conversation, too much of it in Cockney. In *John and Mary at School* we return to the humdrum. It is a story of mildish adventures all taking place within the compass of rustic life and a village school. Perhaps the best present of all for this age (7 to 12) is provided by Wells Gardner, who has had the brilliant idea of reprinting E. Nesbit's masterpiece *The Railway Children*. It is to be hoped that others may follow.

Lastly, for older children (10 to 15), especially boys, there is *Runaway Adventure*, an unusual story of the sea and foreign lands, well and concretely described, in a style which though modern harks back to the adventure books of a hundred years ago or earlier. It is illustrated by cuts by the author.

All these books are regrettably "Thinsies," and few of the illustrations are up to much, *The Wind on the Moon*, however, being an exception in both respects.

FRANCES BIRD.

A SLICE OF LIFE

Memories and Opinions. By "Q." *Cambridge University Press.* 6*s.*

Some years ago I attended one of Q's latterly infrequent lectures, delivered in his rooms in Jesus College, Cambridge, with his typical and delightful informality. Officially it was on Aristotle's Poetics, but if by any chance the subject was mentioned at all it only served as a cue for yet another digression. Providing us with sherry and biscuits, Q talked about his garden in Cornwall, the teaching of English in secondary schools, Matthew Arnold, the distance between the sun and the earth and their relative size which he illustrated by means of an orange and a pea, his preference for *The Tempest* and a host of other subjects. It was a delightful hour, but we were left with a good deal of bewilderment, being as we thought, no wiser about Aristotle than before.

Or were we? For, in point of fact, we could go back to our rooms to read the Poetics and a score of books about them, good and bad, thus acquiring all the knowledge we needed. But Q, for all his digressions and irrelevancies, gave us an understanding which mere knowledge could never supply; and that was the secret of his personality. He was never one of those dry-as-dust scholars for whom any resemblance between their studies and real life is purely coincidental; life and letters were for him indivisible, the one inevitably contained in, and enhancing the enjoyment of, the other.

For this reason if for no other *Memories and*

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Opinions makes delightful reading, illustrating just this approach to the manifold aspects of life which has equally influenced the civic affairs of Fowey in Cornwall, and the study of English in Cambridge. It is only a fragment of autobiography, Q's apprenticeship as it were, breaking off tragically in the middle of a sentence at the publication of his first novel in 1887. The more's the pity: how one would have loved his own account of Soho and Fleet Street in the 90's, or of Cambridge during the forty years of his professorship, or of his activities as County Councillor and Alderman, Justice of the Peace and Mayor of Fowey. Or his own version of the many legends that inevitably began to surround him—of, for instance, the occasion when, still unreconciled to the admission of women to the University, he glanced round a lecture room crowded with women undergraduates and eventually addressed the only male representative with a defiant: "Sir . . ."

But we have here, at least, his childhood and adolescence; Polperro, secondary school, public school and Oxford in the 80's. There can rarely have been a less egocentric autobiographer, and towards the end of the third chapter he remarks: . . . much of this book has hitherto been written against the grain since by habit I prefer to write of other people and of these objectively. Yet, together with the extraordinary lucidity and vividness of his memory, this objectiveness constitutes half the charm of the book. Just as he gave us a subtle understanding of Aristotle by talking about a variety of things apparently unconnected with the real subject, so here his personality emerges rounded and complete. His miniatures of people and places and customs are always delightfully etched; portraits of his grandparents, a visit to a rural pantomime in his early childhood, his first tragi-comic day at school. And his easy style is always perfectly adapted to the subject matter.

Q was a particularly happy personality, and his *Memories and Opinions* is, in spite of its incompleteness, a legacy to this particularly sad world which no one with any belief in the return of sanity and the values for which he stood should miss.

W. P. RILLA

Week-end Competition

No. 776

Set by Roger Marvell

The usual prizes are offered for twenty lines of verse expressing the preferences and prejudices excited by Christian names. Entries to arrive by Dec. 27.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 773

Set by Norman MacKenzie

A well-known brand of antiseptic bears on its label a remarkable adjectival list of its qualities. It is, we read, "Non-toxic, Analgesic, Endosmotic, Non-Haemostatic, Non-Caustic, Anti-Thermic, Keroplastic, Stable." Competitors are invited to devise similar lists to describe any three personalities of literature or politics. The adjectives should explain themselves where possible, but in obscure cases, a footnote may be added. Libel will disqualify.

Report by Norman MacKenzie

Competitors showed a great deal of unanimity in their choice of subjects. Shaw, Joad, Agate, Churchill, Wells, D. H. Lawrence and Coward turned up in entry after entry. Between them I could very easily have compiled a potted biography and character sketch for each person. Critics clearly laboured under the libel veto. William Bliss sent an open letter protesting against this restriction, which was still too damaging to print. Those who thumbed their Greek lexicons did better on the whole but were often far too obscure—at least to one like myself who never struggled past the elementary requirements of trigonometry on the Greek alphabet. Most people produced one or two brilliant compounds but found it difficult to devise more than a dozen. I print some of the choicer examples taken from individual entries. A first prize of two guineas to S. A. Cooper, whose ingenuity seems to warrant special recognition though his entry falls short of runners-up in some ways. Two guineas divided between Leslie Johnson, Allan M. Laing and W. N. Dixon as second-prizewinners.

G. B. Shaw: Cunctative: (Fabian; from Q. Fabius Maximus, surnamed "Cunctator").—J. MEEK.

Neville Chamberlain: Ferrobrummugeous.

Stanley Baldwin: Tibiferous, Harrocabalian.—C. F. RATHBONE.

Beverley Baxter: Antipedalian. (Down on Michael Foot.).—L. G. UDALL.

Noel Coward: Luscious, non-beastly.—MEHITABEL.

Sir James Grigg: Anti-hyblaean (Hybla, town in Sicily, famous for its honey), Genethliac. (Person skilled in calculation of nativities.)—BEN KANE.

Byron: Pedheraldic, homhellenic, oedipodean, photogenic, dead.—JOHN BOOKER.

Gandhi: Non-denticulate, Anti-paraphernalia.—JOYCE JOHNSON.

FIRST PRIZE

Churchill: Nunquacessive.[1] Agriviamontipugn.[2] Bellidelictipunitive. A good Defascic (subsequent over-solidification of the proletic cells being combated by the regirestorative base).

Pierlot: Pisallergic. Dryarchicrastic.[3] Non-consolvent (i.e., dissolvent of resistants rapidly and col-laboratory products slowly).

Himmler: Megalozygoid.[4] Festiloquiprocurative.[5] Multidecapitant. Solipsifidant.[6] Heteranthropolethal. Leucobranchiate.[7]

[1] "We shall never surrender."

[2] "We shall fight in the fields, in the streets and on the hills."

[3] Druas=a wood, archein=to govern, krasis=a fusion; hence Dryarchicrasy is the fusing of the forces of the Bush, or Maquis, with those of the State.

[4] Like a big yoke.

[5] Taking the place of another in speaking on a festival occasion.

[6] Trusting only one's self.

[7] White about the gills, as he must now be.

S. A. COOPER.

SECOND PRIZES

C. E. M. Joad: Propaedeutic, epexegetical, non-aphasic, agrokinetic (i.e., wandering over the fields), protatic (it all depends on . . .). calefacient, versatile, barbate.

Herbert Morrison: Miserythrist (hating red), prophlebitic, setaceous, anti-pyretic (responsible for fire-fighting), pachydermatous, politophantic (cf. hierophantic).

James Joyce: Acateleptic, bathymetric (measuring the depths), anomalistic, non-pudic (in the old sense of chaste), prurient. W. N. DIXON.

G. B. Shaw: Non-alcoholic, non-fuliginous, non-carnivorous, cerebrotonic, scintillate, catalytic, iconoclastic, cachinnative, protean.

H. G. Wells: Dynamic, irritant, anti-catholic, excitative, corrosive, non-tolerant, chimerical, fertile.

Hilaire Belloc: Amplitudinous, anisotrophic,[1] purgatorious, Bacchic, anfractuous, anti-puritanic, antibromidic, peripatetic, didactic, facetious.

[1] Possessing different properties in different directions, i.e., "He seems to think nobody minds his books being all of different kinds."

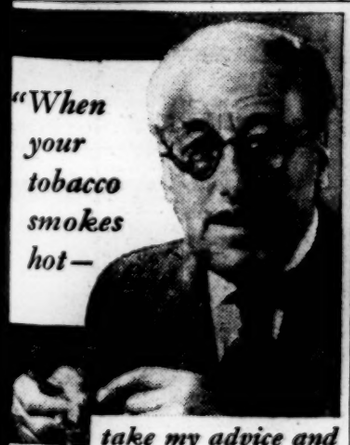
ALLAN M. LAING.

G. B. Shaw: Hermeneutical, leguminiphagous, cruritractive, quizzico-quidditive, gambadacious, hispid.

Aldous Huxley: Anthropophobic, hierophantic, autovident, longinquitous, omphaloscopic, irenic.

T. S. Eliot: Aristarchian, polyanagogic, intrabasilical, caconymophilous, tetralogistic, hodiernal.

LESLIE JOHNSON.



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